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CHRISTIAN DOGMATICS:

A TEXT-BOOK

FOR

Academical Instruction and Private Study.

BY

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SECOND DIVISION.

MAN'S PRESENT CONDITION.

SECTION LXXII.—THE SAD REALITY.

THE possibility of the fall became a reality already in the first man, and all mankind after him reaps its bitter fruit. The absolute universality of sin and misery upon earth is a fact, which is not only announced in various ways in Holy Scripture, but is also borne witness to in the most undoubted manner by the history of mankind and the self-consciousness of every man. That which cannot thus be denied by any one is nevertheless first properly recognised and deplored when sin is regarded in the light of conscience, of the Gospel, and of spiritual experience.

Dark as was the region we were lately traversing, that to which our eye is now directed is relatively clear and wide. The doctrine of sin (Hamartology) presents to us in this section a melancholy, but most important, field for investigation. He who is really governed by the "passion for reality" can hardly do better than examine moral evil in all its various tendencies.

1. There is no fact from which we can more safely start upon our investigation, than the generally recognised phenomenon that no mortal upon earth is really happy. The well-known saying of Solon to Crœsus is not seriously contradicted by any one; but it does not merely declare that we cannot be sure of that happiness before death; it rather signifies that true happiness is, from its very nature, wanting to us all. Is happiness nothing else but the harmony between our wants and our condition? then the constant condition of man is best described by one word—discord. Discord in his own inner life, between reason and faith, between heart and conscience, between will and action. Discord between ourselves and other men, who apparently go with us, but are really opposed to us.[1] Discord above all with God, without whom we cannot live, and to whom we cannot draw nigh. Our peace is every moment disturbed by painful recollections, sad experiences, and sorrowful prospects. That condition does not proceed from causes external to us, because even where outward circumstances have been changed in the desired direction, it continues to exist; it cannot be changed nor reasoned away. The heart has no rest, because the conscience has no peace; the conscience has no peace,

[1] Gen. xvi. 12.

because we do not stand in the proper relation to God. Our inmost self-consciousness testifies, in agreement with Holy Scripture, that the deepest source of our misery is to be sought in sin, and it irresistibly urges us to examine more closely this cause of all our unhappiness.

2. The absolute *universality* of sin is most emphatically affirmed in Holy Scripture. The Lord speaks of all His hearers without distinction as sinners, and calls the human heart the seat of every wickedness.[2] St. Paul speaks of the universal guiltiness of the Jewish, as well as of the heathen world,[3] and even of those who already believe in Christ. St. John[4] and St. James[5] assure us that they still from time to time sin again. All these statements do but repeat in different words that very thing which was already confessed in the days of the Old Testament.[6] Holy Scripture speaks only of one sinless being, but He was the Man from heaven,[7] and the world, on the contrary, lieth in wickedness as in its natural element.[8] A new birth is therefore required of every one,[9] whilst repentance and forgiveness of sins must be preached to every nation without any exception.[10] Even if other passages in the Bible seem to teach somewhat different, this semblance disappears on closer examination. St. Luke xv. 7 is not spoken of the ninety-nine sinless ones, but of such as outwardly lived without reproach, and from the standpoint of legality need no repentance. In Mark x. 14, the children are considered as fit for the kingdom of God, not on account of their moral purity, but of their simplicity and humility. The devout Heathen[11] is pleasing to God, and just as the Jew, is to be received into the community of those who are saved through Christ. The words of the Apostle, lastly, in 1 John iii. 9, point out the highest ideal of Christian life, which, however, according to 1 John i. 8, ii. 1, is yet not in any degree reached here.

3. The whole *history* of mankind confirms these statements. That of the old world begins with fratricide, and ends with a deluge, and that of the new is as much sullied as is that of the old. "Everywhere we see a dark shadow, which throws a gloom over almost every division of earthly life" (J. Müller). The Israel of God has objectively far greater privileges than Heathendom, but subjectively it is not on the whole in a much better position.[12] We find the life even of the best men stained by moral flaws, or, where we cannot indicate such, as in Abel, Jonathan, Daniel, and others, we ascribe this only to our imperfect knowledge, not to their absolute perfection. Even the blessed influence of Christianity, though it has been able to limit the power of sin, has not by any means been able to expel it. Our own times have taught us something of the terrible ravages of sin, in a manner which must for a very long time put to shame all the self-glorying of mankind.

4. No wonder, then, that the *self-consciousness* of the individual man and of mankind announces in very different forms this same truth. Look, for

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[2] Matt. vii. 11; xv. 19.
[3] Rom. iii. 9, 23.
[4] 1 John i. 18.
[5] James iii. 2.
[6] 1 Kings viii. 46; Job xiv. 4; Prov. xx. 9.
[7] 1 Cor. xv. 47.
[8] 1 John v. 19.
[9] John iii. 5.
[10] Luke xxiv. 47.
[11] Acts x. 35.
[12] Rom. ii. 1, *sqq.*

example, at the universality of sacrifices for sin; at the constantly repeated complaint which we hear even from the best of men, that each succeeding race is worse than the preceding.[13] The few who have the hardihood to maintain that man is radically good will always prove the most superficial. He who says that he has not sinned,[14] when he says it, is usually thinking only of great enormities, without going down to the secret principles of life, or is comparing himself with those who in respect of morality are even lower than he is. A more profound self-examination discovers everywhere, to use the Arabian saying, "that black peppercorn in which sin has its focus." Hence it is that even from heathen lips we hear most striking statements concerning this; thus Seneca says (*De Irâ*. iii. 26), "Omnes inconsulti et improvidi sumus, omnes incerti, queruli, ambitiosi, mali inter malos vivimus;" and Ovid, "Video meliora proboque, Deteriora sequor;" while Horace says, "Ætas parentum pejor avis tulit nos nequiores, mox daturos progeniem vitiosiorem;" Tacitus, "Corrumpere et corrumpi sæculum vocatur.—Vitiis *nemo* sine nascitur."—Compare further Plato, *de Rep.* vii. c. 3, *sqq.*; Xenophon, *Cyropædia* vi. 1, 41; and many other places.—The indictment comes with still greater distinctness from Jewish lips,[15] *e.g.*, David, Isaiah, John Baptist; while it is heard with the greatest clearness in the most celebrated Christians,—St. Paul, Augustine in his *Confessions*, Luther in so many of his letters and conversations. Nor are the observations of experienced men, who were skilled in human philosophy, without value here. "Il y a toujours quelque chose dans le malheur de nos meilleurs amis, qui ne nous déplaît pas" (La Rochefoucauld). "Mon ami, tu ne connais pas la race maudite, a laquelle nous appartenons" (Frederic the Great). The proverbs, "Every man has his price, for which to sell his principles." "It is easier to weep with the mourner, than to rejoice with the rejoicing."—Kant asserts that a man will often find in himself a disposition with regard to his friends, for which he must feel deeply shamed, etc.—The ground for this universal conviction need not be sought in an absolutely immediate consciousness in mankind of its corruption. Mankind, indeed, is made up of individuals of very different shades of development, and this explanation would easily lead us to the hypothesis of innate ideas. We would rather think of the impression which every one sooner or later receives from those he observes, and which, confirmed ere long by observation and reasoning, is alike elucidated and corroborated by what we discover from a close investigation in our own bosom. Thus from the very earliest times has been established a universal belief of mankind in its own sinful condition, a belief so firm that he who contradicts it as to himself, is by no means considered morally pure, but rather as half demented, or irrecoverably arrogant. Against a confession as unanimous as this, the assertion of some, that everything even in the moral world is good as it is, and that without this evil element the world would be less perfect, may be called a thoughtless phrase, nay, a terrible blasphemy of God.

5. The right knowledge of sin is of preponderating importance. "Cognitio peccati initium salutis" (Calvin). "Without the descent into

[13] Ps. xii. 1, and many other passages; compare Eccles. vii. 10. [14] Jerem. ii. 35.
[15] Ps. cxliii. 2; Isa. vi. 5; Matt. iii. 14.

self-recognition, no ascent to the recognition of God" (Tholuck). And so in the Heidelberg Catechism the knowledge of our misery through sin is properly called the first of the things *necessary*. It is only by this means that the necessity for a special revelation can be acknowledged;[16] while, on the other hand, we can be sure that a Pelagian Hamartology will inevitably lead to a Rationalistic Christology. All the errors of the Modernism of the present time are the result of a theoretical and practical denial of the existence of sin; while, on the other hand, the so much desired regeneration of Christian Dogmatics is to be looked for through a deeper conviction of sin.

6. Every-day experience teaches that the right knowledge of sin is as rare as it is difficult. The ground of this difficulty lies (objectively) in the nature of sin, having an abnormal, arbitrary, and ever-changing character, and (subjectively) in the pride which, itself the first and greatest sin of all, most sadly interferes with a true knowledge of self. Obliged to be our own judges, we are as little impartial as well instructed to judge, and we constantly deceive ourselves. Hence, the true conviction of sin in the Gospel is represented as the work of the Holy Spirit,[17] whilst the prayer of Ps. xix. 12—14, and cxxxix. 23, 24, cannot be too often repeated. However, it can only hope to be heard, when we tread this domain with the infallible light in our hands.

7. No abstract reasoning, however acute, is sufficient to make us know sin in its true light. As we dissect the idea of sin with the knife of dialectics, sin itself fades only too quickly before our eyes into an empty idea. We must here tread the path of psychology, and not that of speculation; and the proverb, "descendite ut ascendatis" must be ever kept in mind. Over a phenomenon in the domain of morals such as this, a moral judgment can only be the right one. Sin must therefore be regarded in the light of *conscience*, which judges more quickly and more accurately than the understanding, and is less easily corrupted; and in the light of the *Gospel*, which not merely, like the law, gives us the knowledge of sin,[18] but reveals it as sin in all its deformity, by means of the full splendour of God's holiness and grace. Specially too must it be seen in the light of the spiritual *experience* of ourselves, and of all who ever had the courage to cast a deeper look down; for in this case the universal is here conceived from the particular. It is not the rich young man, but the poor publican, who will best fathom the mystery of unrighteousness.

Compare specially, as to this chapter, DOERTENBACH, article *Sünde* in Herzog's *R. E.*, xv.; J. MÜLLER, *a. a. O.*; H. T. L. ERNESTI, *Vom Ursprung der Sünde nach Paulin. Lehrgehalt.* (1862); E. NAVILLE, *Le problême du Mal* (1863); R. ROTHE, *Theol. Ethik.*, 2nd ed., iii. (1870), pp. 1—107; and last, but not least, A. THOLUCK, *Die Lehre von der Sünde und vom Versöhner*, 9th ed. (1871).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Is there ground for the statement that Jesus did not regard and treat all men as sinners? [Van Hengel, Scholten.]—Further elucidation of the passages in Scripture which seem to plead against the absolute universality of sin.—Absolute consensus of Œcumenical and Church symbols on this point.—Connection of the doctrine of sin with all the principal points of Christian dogma.—How is it that the eternal distinction between moral good and evil is so sadly overlooked by many, and specially at the present time? [Isa. v. 20.]

[16] Section xxx. [17] John xvi. 8. [18] Rom. iii. 20.

SECTION LXXIII.—THE NATURE OF SIN.

The nature of sin reveals itself in the perverted relation in which the sinner places himself to the demands of the moral law. Sin is everything—principle as well as act—which contradicts this law, and which thus makes man disobedient to the Supreme Lawgiver. In contradiction to the love which He demands, it displays a selfish character, soon rising to hostility, and requiring satisfaction at any price. In this general description of the unchangeable nature of sin, its absolute condemnation is at once pronounced. Sin does not consist in this, that we are not yet that which we must become; but rather in this, that we are just the opposite of what we ought to be.

1. The question, *what* is really sin? is perhaps best answered by considering the word itself. The word, derived from the old High German *suona* (sühne) thus points of itself to something for which expiation must be made. It is the translation of the Greek ἁμαρτία, ἁμαρτάνειν, by which is denoted a falling away from, or missing of the right way; and of the Hebrew חַטָּא, which also denotes falling away.[1] With this are allied the ideas which find their utterance in the words שְׁגָגָה (going astray), אָוֶן (vanity), אָשָׁם (guilt). Judged philologically, the idea of sin is developed much more among the Hebrews than among the Greeks, the natural consequence of the revelation of the holiness of God.

2. Closer scrutiny soon shows that the idea of sin is limited by another idea, viz., that of law.[2] "Where no law is, there is no *transgression*;" so this very word best describes, though still merely in a general way, the nature of sin. From the Christian Theistic standpoint the existence of an eternal moral order in the world is placed above all doubt, and consequently the distinction between moral good and moral evil in the objective sense of the word. That which according to this rule must be done, is good; that which ought not to be done, and goes beyond the fixed rule, is evil. "Peccare est tanquam limites transilire" (Cicero). A law is not advice, nor trial, nor prayer, but a positive demand, to which our only relation can be one of subjection, or of transgression. The latter is only possible in a rational and moral being; brutes, infants, may do wrong, but cannot actually sin.[3] But man is conscious in himself that he is not without or above, but unconditionally *under* law: the conscience expresses the claim of moral obligation; and where that claim is disowned, sin is born. The self-will which sets itself up against law, is certainly not the better, because

[1] Compare Heb. x. 26. [2] Rom. iv. 15. [3] Compare James iv. 17.

it displays itself as pretended independence and strength of mind; indeed, it is not moral strength, but weakness, to withdraw from the command of duty, and he who oversteps the prescribed limits commits a moral wrong. According to Scripture,[4] sin bears the mark both of unrighteousness,[5] and of transgression of law.[6] It is hardly necessary to point out that such expressions must be applied not merely to the sinful deed, but also to the sinful thought. What we do outwardly is merely the revelation of our inner nature, even when we transgress the law.

3. We cannot, however, allow ourselves to be limited by this general view, when we consider that behind the impersonal law there stands no one less than the personal lawgiver, against whom each transgressor of the law makes himself chargeable with positive *disobedience*. All virtue is in its nature obedience;[7] all sin, disobedience to God, even when we do wrong to our neighbour or ourselves.[8] The oft-used antithesis between autonomy and heteronomy in morals fails when we regard morality as a duty towards God Himself; for us theonomy must be autonomy. Man is obliged, not only to obey his own moral nature (his better self), but Him who has implanted in him this better nature, the only Lawgiver, who is able to save and destroy,[9] and who has made the claims of the law unconditionally His own. Now the sinner, indeed, rejects this his obligation to this claim, and so becomes a rebel in God's moral kingdom. Hence sin in Scripture is often described as unfaithfulness and covenant-breaking, as the words παράπτωμα, παρακοή, παραπίπτειν, etc., denote. Hence, too, springs that deep feeling as to the temerity of sin, which is so specially and expressly declared in so many sayings of the prophets.[10]

4. The being of the lawgiver and the chief claim of the law are indissolubly *one;* the sum and substance of the commandments is eloquently comprehended in the word "*love.*"[11] Where the sinner sets himself against the two, there must his sin necessarily display the character of *egotism*. Man, as it were, displaces the centre round which his thought, feeling, will, and actions must constantly move; sin is decentralisation, in which the place of God is occupied by self. This selfishness is in no degree an exaggeration, but much rather the opposite, of pure self-love. The last presupposes love to God, which the first denies. The proof, that sin in its very nature cannot be called aught else but selfishness, is specially shown in this, that all transgressions, whether directly or indirectly, lead off from, or lead back to it. This characteristic of sin is pointed out in various ways in Holy Scripture. The perfection of Jesus is shown in this, that He did not seek to please Himself,[12] the perfection of love is shown in the fact that it seeks not its own,[13] and the summit of corruption in the terrible last days is denoted by the phenomenon that men "shall be lovers of themselves."[14] Thus the life for self is diametrically opposed to life for

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[4] 1 John i. 9; iii. 4.
[5] ἀδικία.
[6] ἀνομία, elsewhere παράβασις.
[7] Gen. xxii. 12.
[8] Compare Gen. xxxix. 9; Ps. li. 4.
[9] James iv. 12.
[10] Isa. i. 2; Micah vi. 1, etc.
[11] Deut. vi. 5; Matt. xxii. 37—40.
[12] Rom. xv. 3.
[13] 1 Cor. xiii. 5.
[14] 2 Tim. iii. 1, 2; compare 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4.

God and Christ.[15] So on account of this "arbitrary resistance to the Divine Will" sin must necessarily be the source of the difference which we have already noticed. It is thus recognised by the most distinguished thinkers (Müller, Nitzsch, Naville), that here, in a degree such as is met nowhere else, the right mark is hit.

5. This selfishness inevitably becomes *hostility* where the sinful lust comes into painful collision with the law of God, or with the equally selfish will of a neighbour. The utterances of Scripture on this point,[16] which the Confession of the Reformed Church emphatically repeats, are, when rightly explained, raised by history and experience beyond all doubt. Even the tenderest love is not free from a hidden selfishness, and love changes into hate, where the self-denial which it demands is rejected by flesh and blood. It even rises sometimes to the desire that there were neither law nor lawgiver, and, where a man can withdraw himself from the supremacy of the former at any cost, to powerless rage and spite, as is seen in the Cain of Lord Byron. The "utinam unam cervicem haberet" is not the thought of a Caligula only; and where a man dethrones his God in order to deify self, he becomes at last destitute of "natural affection."[17]

6. From what has been said it appears that sin in no way exhibits a merely negative character, although the distinction between sin (*peccatum*) and crime (*crimen*) may not be overlooked; yet the first has, even when regarded as a principle only, along with its negative, a sadly positive side. It is a positive negation of God and His will, in so far as it puts something entirely different in place of that will. In the sinner there is not only a want (*defectus*) of that which must be found in him; but also an inclination, a tendency, a striving (*affectus*) which ought not to be in him. "Defectus sunt ignoratio Dei, non ardere amore Dei, vacare metu, fiduciâ Dei; hos defectus comitantur pravæ affectiones, amor nostri, superbia," etc. (Melancthon). Certainly, too, the not being as yet what we can and must become, should be called sin, "omne minus bonum habet rationem mali." Yet sin does not merely or chiefly consist in this, that we are still removed far from the aim we are to attain to; but much more in this, that we fall far away voluntarily from it, in order to follow out our own ends. Though it taints the whole man, sin really is placed in the domain of the will; and even with respect to transgression through weakness, the rule, "omne peccatum est voluntarium," may still to a certain degree prevail. It is not merely a temporary want of, but a denial in principle of, the moral good, which is unconditionally willed by God. Though it sometimes assumes the appearance of good, yet it has nothing in common with the essence of the matter; it is ofttimes the caricature of it, but never only a lesser degree thereof. The distinction between good and evil is as great as between light and darkness, and the temptation to the latter is doubly dangerous, since it hides itself under the appearance of the former.[18]

7. The absolute guilt of sin, so strongly expressed in Holy Scripture,[19] is the natural consequence of its character, so depicted. Disorder in place

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[15] 2 Cor. v. 15.
[16] John xv. 24; Rom. viii. 7; Tit. iii. 3; and other places.
[17] Rom. i. 31.
[18] 2 Cor. xi. 14.
[19] Rom. iii. 19.

of order, rebellion instead of subjection, selfishness in place of self-denial, hate where love is demanded with the highest right; we cannot possibly conceive anything more sad, or anything more terrible. It is one of the excellences of our Symbolical and Liturgical Writings, that this idea so constantly appears in them, as, for example, in the excellent "Confession de péché," which is still used in the Walloon Churches, and—one of the greatest misfortunes of our time that it is wanting in by far the greatest number of them.

Comp. C. WEISZAECKER, *Zu der Lehre vom Wesen der Sünde*, in the *Jahrb. für Deutsche Theol.* (1856), i., p. 131, *sqq.*; J. MÜLLER, *a. a. O.*, p. 166, *sqq.*; E. SARTORIUS, *Die Lehre von der heiligen Liebe.* (1840), i., p. 61, *sqq.*; NITZSCH, *a. a. O.*, p. 105; P. H. HUGENHOLTZ, *Het hooge belang van de kennis onzer Zonde* (1864).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Is not the entire distinction between good and evil relative and conventional?—Is there ground for asserting that the conceptions of sin in the Old Testament and in the New are actually distinct?—The relation of the ideas of law and obligation.—Is a thing morally evil because God forbids it, or does God forbid it because it is morally evil?—The distinction between selfishness and proper self-love.—Can every sin be truly explained as a revealing of natural selfishness?—Import and truth of the fifth answer in the Heidelberg Catechism.—How can we explain, and how best combat, the sad denial of the existence of sin, so specially seen in our time?

SECTION LXXIV.—ITS ORIGIN IN MAN.

The actuality and the influence of the sinful principle in man, is in no degree the consequence of causes, consisting merely either in the original direction of his nature, or in the unchangeable nature of good, or in his external circumstances and position, or in anything external to himself. Every explanation of the origin of sin, in which its essential guilt is disowned, is rejected by the conscience, and is in principle inadmissible. The sinful act is the consequence of the perverted disposition, and this, again, is the fruit of a moral corruption of human nature, which has its seat in the heart, and thence radiates into every direction of the internal and external life.

1. After the inquiry as to the nature of sin naturally follows that into its origin, in the first place, in the individual man, considered by himself. This question, discussed in every age, and answered in divers ways, deserves the more consideration because it has not only speculative, but preponderating practical importance. From the nature of the case, a negative answer must here precede the positive one.

2. According to some, sin necessarily proceeds from the metaphysical imperfection of man, and may even be considered as absolutely inseparable from it. Because man is a finite and limited being, it is so natural that he should stumble and fall, that we must much more feel surprise if this were not to happen. This idea, formerly supported by Leibnitz, and since his time by others too, and specially by clever defenders of the so-called Modern Theology,[1] seems at first sight not unacceptable, but closer investigation shows that it is overweighted with insuperable difficulties. For as soon as sin becomes something absolutely inevitable, at that very time it ceases to be sin. Besides, this theory is quite unable to explain the facts of the case properly. Experience teaches that it is not merely a weak, but a really wicked will which governs not a few of mankind. Evil appears not only as weakening, but as an active and energic perversion of our moral nature. A crime arouses not merely compassion, but terror, which from this standpoint becomes really quite unintelligible. Holy Scripture even calls us not only to sorrow, but to hatred against sin, and speaks of a power of evil, and even of the depths of Satan, which exhibit a much more serious character than that of imperfection and weakness only. According to its declarations, which conscience supports, we are speaking here not only of a fault, but of a crime; not of a weakness, but of a terrible power; not of something necessary, but of something contrary to nature. Where this is denied, every self-accusation is, in other words, explained as a miserable self-deception, which is disposed of when we analyse more deeply the evil which has been done.

3. Not more favourable can our judgment be upon the opinion of those who consider sin as a fruit of sensibility, which develops so much earlier than reason, and hence, even involuntarily, leads us astray, from time to time. According to this view, too, sin primarily originates in God, who has given man such a sensuous nature, and has thus willed that he should gradually develop from sin as the lower, to good as the higher. But then, how is it that man sins, not only at that time of life when sensuousness still entirely governs him, but even when its allurements are felt in a much less degree, gives himself up entirely as the slave of evil? Whence come all those spiritual sins, pride, envy, etc., which have nothing or little in common with sensuality, and which we see rise to such a surprising height in the Prince of darkness? Whence comes it, that God's Son has taken human nature, even its sensuous side, and notwithstanding continued sinless? It is only the self-depreciation, but not the self-exaltation of the sinner, which can be explained in this way, and in its inevitable consequences this theory cannot be aught but injurious. It necessarily calls out a rigorous asceticism, which finally attaches the highest value to a "bodily exercise," so little valued by St. Paul,[2] and at last makes every free, lively, and sound view of life impossible. In vain, too, does the hypothesis of sensibility look for a sufficient recommendation in the words of Scripture. The saying of the Lord, in St. Matt. xxvi. 41, refers exclusively to the momentary state of His disciples, and serves to recommend to

[1] See, *e.g.*, Riggenbach, *Die neuere Theologie in der deutschen Schweiz.*
[2] 1 Tim. iv. 8.

them most specially the duty of watchfulness. The words of St. James[3] need not be exclusively understood of sensual desire; and besides, it falls short of an explanation of how that desire had its origin in the human heart. Lastly, as far as relates to St. Paul's statements, only when we cling to the sound of the letter can we find in his teaching concerning the flesh (σάρξ) and its operation a support for the theory which is in dispute. And even by flesh the apostle does not mean sensuality, but the entire sinful nature of man, to which belong not only the body, but the understanding, feeling, and will also, and which as such stands in direct opposition to the renewed spiritual principle by which the Christian is led. Hence, too, he mentions among the works of the flesh those which have absolutely nothing to do with sensuality as such.[4] To be carnally minded is death, not the possession of, or the life, in the flesh itself. If sensibility is a temptation and incitement to sin, the real cause of the latter must be sought much deeper.

4. Still less can it be found in the true nature of moral good, of whose light moral evil could be called the inevitable shadow. "Perfect holiness," so we hear it said on more than one side, "and absolute wickedness are both pure abstractions." We should never "become conscious of good, if evil were not; sin is a necessary point of transition to a higher perfection; a moment of development, not intended to continue, but to be ever again repeated. If man had not eaten of the tree of knowledge, he would not have been man, but beast." This theory, too, is not new; it met with strong supporters among some of the Gnostic sects, *e.g.*, the Ophites, and was also regarded favourably by Lactantius, J. Scotus Erigena, and others. Schiller pleaded for it in "*Etwas über die ersten Menschengesellsch. nach der Mos. Urk.*" when he declared his conviction that the fall in an intellectual and moral view might much more be called an advance; and even with Hegel, evil consists in reality in this, that man adheres to the standpoint of the lower naturalness, above which he must be raised by the spirit. According to this system, there is thus a certain discord in the nature of man, but a discord which will, even in the domain of morals, gradually disappear.

Yet, it seems that even this conception of sin, as "interpretamentum boni,"[5] can be as little adequately justified before the tribunal of reason as before that of conscience, and that all properly so-called dread of evil may from this standpoint be called pessimistic folly. If sin be a necessary consequence of finiteness, it would be a curse, and not a blessing, to be a finite being, and a Buddhistic absorption into the Nirwana (the Nothing, the Void) would at length be the most desirable prospect of him who above all else desires to be relieved from these chains. Certainly, under a Divine government, which causes good to come even out of evil, sin itself may become a means to higher completeness; yet he who states that the last is absolutely unattainable without the first, says, in other words, that God has notwithstanding properly willed and ordained that which He hates and

[3] James i. 14, 15.
[4] Gal. v. 19, *sqq.*; compare Col. ii. 18—23; Rom. viii. 6.
[5] Lactantius.

punishes. This whole conception arises, consciously or unconsciously, from a pantheistic idea of God, according to which God effects evil as well as good, so that properly for Him, evil as positive evil does not exist. From the Theistic standpoint, on the contrary, we must maintain the finite, as such, is not yet the sinful, and in the moral world, at least, light without shadow is possible, or—the conception of the highest holiness must be rejected as absurd.[6] Even the often used comparison, derived from discords which are resolved in higher harmony, rests on an involuntary confusion of the æsthetic and ethical spheres; between discord and keynote the distance is relative, between moral good and evil in principle the contrast is absolute. Where this absoluteness is brought down to something merely relative, the spiritual nature of man, as well as the loftiness of the moral ideal, is most miserably misapprehended; and where no other prospect is open to mankind, but to continue in sin for ever, both Soteriology and Eschatology may be placed in the list of follies. "We console ourselves for our vices by declaring them necessities, and clothe in the mantle of science the testimony of a corrupted heart" (Lacordaire).

5. Many other solutions of the proposed question might be mentioned, if completeness were here required. As the most superficial, must perhaps be mentioned that of the old philosopher (Socrates), that error was the source of sin, since men simply are forgetful of the duties which they intend to fulfil. As the most profound we must mention that of R. Rothe, the most renowned divine of the nineteenth century, who thinks that he finds in man's original relation to matter the key of the enigma, and just thereby plainly overlooks the difference between natural and moral evil. While he and others thus find the causes of sin in man himself, not unimportant, on the other hand, is the number of those who in causes external to him seek for the ground of the sad phenomenon, *e.g.*, in the imperfect condition of society. But then, whence is it that the society itself, consisting of individuals, is so corrupt, and that all attempts to reform it fail so miserably? The question is only transplaced, not resolved, where the key, which Scripture and experience offer, is rejected. The secret of the origin of sin can be first discovered only when *sin* is viewed in the light of conscience.

6. There is no fact which is more plainly announced by conscience than that sin is not fate; but an act which we as such have to impute to ourselves, as it will be imputed to us by God, if He does not forgive it. "There is no fatal law which condemns us to impurity" (Naville). Sin in man thus arises, because his will is inclined to evil, and because he consequently most fatally misuses the freedom bestowed upon him. Let it be true, that this misuse is determined by all sorts of circumstances and influences external to us, it is no less certain that it is we ourselves who thus decide for ourselves, without any compulsion and without offering a proper resistance. How is it that we, who know this and even condemn it, nevertheless constantly let our lust prevail over our duty? The misuse of our personal liberty is the consequence of the *moral corruption of human nature.*

7. When we speak of this moral corruption, we by no means declare

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[6] 1 John i. 5.

that the original nature of man was so wholly destroyed and annihilated, that it might be literally called nothing but sin, "a mass of corruption." On the contrary, according to Augustine, "*in quantum natura est, bona est.*" But in whatever degree our nature has continued entire, in other words, in whatever degree man does not cease to be man, yet is it completely penetrated by a moral corruption of which the heart is the source and centre. Impurity in the heart we describe as corruption, because it has been preceded by an originally better moral condition.[7] We thus distinguish between the *essential being* of man (*essentia substantia*), and his present *condition*, the sinful nature which has now once for all become inseparable from man. Hence we call every sinful act the revelation of a sinful principle, and of this sinful principle we assert, that it—save the one exception which was seen in Jesus Christ—is from birth inherent in every member of the human race, in this respect always unvarying.

8. The evidence for this statement is already given in the nature of sin itself, according to what we have thus far learnt of its nature. If it be not willed by God, and just as little a fruit of man's original disposition, it must then be called a fruit of moral corruption. A phenomenon so universal is only to be explained from a cause equally universal. Hence sin exhibits, in the midst of innumerable variety, everywhere again and again, one and the same *character;* so that we may, with some knowledge of mankind, almost count upon the way in which any one in certain circumstances will forsake his higher calling. This uniformity points, too, to a cause lying deeper, and present in every one without exception. Even the surprising power of sin, notwithstanding all that has been done to resist it, seems inconceivable, when we are not permitted to speak of a corruption of the entire nature, from which sin is always springing as bubbling water, as if from an impure fountain.[8] "Just as little as mankind on its part is merely an atomistic crowd of spirits, so little can it be atomistically individualised in its sins."[9] Education also and example are undoubtedly factors which must not be overlooked. But, though rain and sunshine make weeds grow more quickly, they could not draw them out of the ground, if they had not been laid there before. Evil shows itself already in the child, before education and training can operate; not to say that even the most pious parents have had most wicked children, or *vice versâ*. Take for example, Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, and Amon, the son of Manasseh. In truth, "we can as well explain the rain by the clouds, as sin only by education."

9. That which the nature of the case declares, Holy Scripture expressly confirms in more than one way. When we listen to Jesus, we hear Him profess that the heart of man[10] is the seat of the deepest impurity, and that man, who is born of the flesh alone, is utterly unsuited for the spiritual kingdom of God.[11] Nor does that which He testifies of the inner light of man,[12] and of the good and honest heart of the well-inclined hearers of the Gospel,[13] absolutely conflict with this. The first

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[7] Section lxx.
[8] Neth. Conf., Art. xv.
[9] Lange.
[10] Matt. xv. 19.
[11] John iii. 5.
[12] Matt. vi. 22, 23.
[13] Luke viii. 15.

points to the light of conscience, which is dimmed, but by no means extinguished, by sin; the other, to that simple and well-meaning disposition which makes man receptable of the seed of the Kingdom of God, and also in its part is the work of the preparing grace of God. Undoubtedly there is, even in a sinful world, a distinction between men and men,[14] but in a greater or less degree the qualification of "evil"[15] is no less applicable to all. Hence St. Paul calls all men, without distinction, children of wrath by nature[16] (φύσει, naturaliter, indole suâ, cf. Gal. iv. 8), and he thus shows the Jewish as well as the heathen world as sinful and guilty before God.[17] We hear the echoes of these tones even in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. In Gen. viii. 21, God calls the thoughts and imaginations of man's heart, without exception and limitation, "evil from his youth," and declares that He will henceforth spare mankind, because this sinful disposition cannot in any way be destroyed by punishment. Job denies that any one can bring a clean thing[18] out of so many unclean things;[19] and David confesses[20] that he was already born in sin from a sinful mother. Had he in this expression thought chiefly, as some say, of the wickedness of that mother, about which history is silent, it would have been rather a word of excuse than of self-accusation and repentance. Stronger even still, than such separate expressions, does the whole spirit of Holy Scripture plead for the doctrine of the complete corruption of human nature.

10. Self-consciousness and experience expressly confirm all we have said. No one can remember his first evil deed, still less his first sinful thought. On the contrary, every one who examines himself narrowly will find, not only that good in him is too weak, but much more, that there is in him an evil principle, aye, that he is not in a position to withdraw himself by a bold resolve from the rule of selfishness, and to place himself unconditionally under the law of love. How much impurity may spring up in the heart and the imagination, even in the holiest moments! Even apparent good is soon seen to be mixed with evil, and the glory before God continues to be wanting,[21] even where praise with men is earned most widely. It is certainly partial, when, after a well-known saying of Augustine, we consider the virtues of the heathen merely as splendid sins (*splendida vitia*). Augustine himself indeed recognises another and kindlier mode of view.[22] Still less need we despise nobility, humanity, and other good qualities in this sphere; because we see in them the influence, perhaps indirect, but not the less unmistakable, of the Logos before His incarnation.[23] But such exceptions confirm much more than really contradict the melancholy rule; and even from the heathen world, from a very early time, we hear the most bitter complaints of the moral corruption of human nature. Thus Seneca says,[24] "Peccavimus omnes, nec delinquimus tantum, sed ad extremun ævi delinquemus."[25] What wonder that a philosopher like Kant spoke of "radical evil," or that a poet like Lamartine piteously exclaimed, "L'homme est un

[14] John ix. 39—41.
[15] Luke xi. 13.
[16] Ephes. ii. 3.
[17] Rom. iii. 19.
[18] Job xiv. 4.
[19] Job xv. 14; Jerem. xiii. 23.
[20] Ps. li. 5.
[21] Rom. iv. 2.
[22] See Civ. Dei, v. 18.
[23] John i. 4.
[24] De Clem., i. 6.
[25] Comp. § lxxii. 5.

Dieu tombé, qui se souvient des cieux"? When carefully considered, not much can be brought against this doctrine, save that it is painful and humiliating, and that it may be sadly abused. But this last will then only be the case when it is considered without the light of the Gospel, and used as a cloak for sin; and as to the first, such affliction is in every case better than deplorable self-deception. How many blunders have been committed in the education of children, by treating their evil tendencies, as if their nature were in itself pure and good! how often is preaching unfruitful, because the preacher disregards the fallen nature of his hearers! Many a one, after long and fruitless labour, must shamefully confess with Guizot, "Nous avons méconnu le mal inhérent à notre nature."

11. If, on the contrary, the fact of internal corruption is once fixed absolutely fast, then nothing is more natural but that it should radiate from its centre into every part of the internal and external life.[26] Most instructive in this respect is the parable of the Prodigal Son,[27] which makes us see in a most striking manner the history of the development of sin, from selfishness to a false desire for freedom, and from this to the most pitiable slavery and misery. He who thus sketched the sinner, knew better than any one what was in man. Every separate history may in another sense be called again an eternal history, but at the same time it elicits the question, where is the historic root of this wide-spreading tree of unrighteousness hidden? That question points us to the narrative of the fall, of which St. Augustine has so very justly testified, "Nihil est ad prædicandum notius, nihil ad intelligendum secretius."

Compare the literature mentioned in §§ lxxii., lxxiii., lxxiv.

Points for Inquiry.

Whence is it that the question as to the origin of sin in man has in all ages been so differently answered?—The grand alternative.—Further elucidation of the doctrine of St. Paul concerning the power of the flesh.—Resemblance and differences in the representations of ancient and modern Gnosticism.—What in this case is the theory of Schleiermacher?—and of Rothe?—and of the empiric philosophy?—Whence comes the disinclination among so many to recognise the influence of personal freedom in this domain?—Is it reasonable to call the heart alone, and not human nature, corrupt?—Further support of the Scriptural proof.—What judgment must we form on the relatively moral good in the natural man?—Theoretical and practical importance of the recognition of the corruption of man by sin.

SECTION LXXV.—ITS ORIGIN IN MANKIND.

The moral corruption of human nature has its historic ground in the disobedience of our first parents, who voluntarily transgressed God's command, and, in consequence, have lost their original

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[26] Section lxxix.

[27] Luke xv. 11—17.

purity. Between this fall of the first man, and the corruption of the whole human race, there thus exists a direct connexion, which seeks its proper expression in the so-called doctrine of original sin (*peccatum hereditarium*). Whatever may remain here undetermined or incomprehensible, this is sufficiently evident, that in the history of the fall of the Protoplasts must be sought the key for explaining the mystery of sin, but at the same time that that history itself, on its part, points us to a power of evil which was older than the first human pair.

The investigation into the reality, the nature, and the immediate origin of sin, forces us of itself to go back to its first cause, and to look for the first link in the fatal chain. It is necessary that we view the first sin in the light of history, before we can expressly discuss its exact connexion with the universal corruption of our nature.

I. 1. The narrative of the first sin,[1] which must offer the desired key, exhibits itself an hieroglyphical character, and has in all ages been explained in different ways. By not a few,[2] specially in the last century, and since that time, a purely *mythical* conception has arisen, and the idea been defended, that here nothing but the philosophical conception of a pious thinker concerning the commencement of original evil has been laid down in an historical form. In favour of this view, however, we find no preponderating reasons, and there are many objections against it. The narrative presents itself plainly as history; and such an historico-fantastic clothing of a pure philosophic idea, in our view, accords little with the genuine spirit of Jewish antiquity. The distinction between the Jewish and the heathen religions, with the grand mythological background of the latter, must not here be overlooked, while the reasons alleged for the general credibility of the oldest Mosaic records are also available for this particular section. More arbitrary even than the mythical, must the *allegorical* conception be called, (supported by Philo Judæus, M. Maimonides, Origen, and Ambrose,) which refers everything which is said of fruit, serpent, woman, etc., to entirely different things than those which the sacred letter denotes. This explanation presupposes an artistic reflection, such as is at least not to be looked for in the most remote ages, and opens the door for all sorts of suggestions, which soon too easily lead to mockery of that which is thus misunderstood.

We avoid both perils when we place ourselves at the standpoint of the historic conception, which, further examined, is in our estimation supported by sufficient grounds. Here, too, we have a Sagé, if we want to use this word, but one of which the kernel is undoubtedly history; a tradition, originally derived from our first parents themselves, preserved for centuries by word of mouth, afterwards perhaps in hieroglyphs, and finally in writing, which thus became known to Moses, and was

[1] Gen. iii.

[2] Eichhorn, Gabler, etc.

later placed at the head of the Pentateuch. In so far as this tradition was given in a most childish form, and contains elements which cannot possibly be literally apprehended, it may be said that here there is a history written, which, though not real, is nevertheless an infallibly true one.[3] As such it is also afterwards explained and employed in the writings of the Old and New Testament.[4] Besides, the narrative bears an internal character of psychological truth, which recommends it more strongly after every new investigation. Certainly the very remarkable agreement between the chief subject-matter of the Mosaic record and the traditions of the most different nations concerning a fall into sin and its sad results cannot be better explained than by our hypothesis (§ lxx. 14). Whatever in it seems strange or incredible disappears to a considerable extent, when we only know how to get through the shell to the kernel, and consider that we are here moving in a higher sphere than that of a dead level, every-day reality, and in view of many a singularity assume the language of true modesty, "In re obscurâ tutissima ingenua ignorantiæ confessio" (Clericus).

2. In any case so much is at once evident, that the *origin* of the first sin is to be sought neither in God nor in man himself, but in the craft and power of a mysterious Deceiver. It will always be impossible to determine whether this be here only denoted under the image of a serpent, or whether we must conceive of a real serpent, of which, in some way or other, he made use to attain his end. In the last view, which certainly accords most with the letter of the record, one must either assume that the serpent spoke in an unusual manner, with acts, signs, etc., or suppose with Lange that the woman was in a vision during this dialogue. Unacceptable remains always the suggestion, that we have here narrated her own reflections on seeing a serpent eating and yet not dying, in the form of a conversation; when could such thoughts have risen in a still absolutely uncorrupted heart? We must always suppose that the first sinful lust in her heart was raised by a word from without, under whatever form it may have been spoken. The Tempter begins by arousing in the woman, as the easiest deceived, doubts as to the truth of God's word and the goodness of His will. Where by that doubt the unlimited confidence of love is broken, the selfish desire to be like God is called out. Just as a third fatal power does sensuous lust enter into the scene;[5] and where desire brings sin into the world, the victim of temptation becomes at once its instrument against Adam. "Infidelitas radix defectionis; hinc ambitio et superbia fluxit." (Calv.)

3. The unalterable *character* of sin shows itself at once in this first transgression. It reveals itself as a renouncing of law,[6] and as arbitrariness, whereby it naturally is an entire matter of indifference how much or how little selfishness takes for itself, if its demands once prevail over those of love. Hence, too, the *greatness* of the evil here wrought, when measured by a moral rule, cannot seriously be disputed. The first sin was committed in opposition to an absolute, plain, and relatively easy command; from a principle in the highest degree impure, with full consciousness, without any

[3] Nitzsch.
[4] Job xxxi. 33; Hosea vi. 7; Matt. xix. 4—6; 2 Cor. xi. 3, etc.
[5] Gen. iii. 6.
[6] 1 John iii. 4.

need, even without a tolerable pretext, and, if we adhere to the letter of the record, at the instigation of a beast who was subject to man, and from which he must have understood that a very impure spirit was speaking through it.

4. Thus, even the *immediate consequences* of the sin could not be aught else but sad and destructive. So little is this first deed a mistake standing alone, that it becomes much more the source of the saddest change, especially for our first parents. The harmony in man himself between his spiritual and animal nature is destroyed, between his present and his past, between his reason too, and his awakening conscience.[7] Nor less is destroyed the harmony between the man and the woman, where both put away the guilt from themselves, and one comes forth as the accuser of the other. Specially is destroyed the harmony of man with his Creator and the surrounding creation. With these natural consequences are also threatened still more definite punishments of the evil, both to the tempter and to the tempted, and even reaching to inanimate nature. "The fall of man was a cosmic event, as when a kingdom falls with its king" (Von Baader). However difficult it may be to come here to any conclusion on our own authority, since we do not know what would have been the state of things if man had not sinned; of this, at any rate, there can be no doubt, that death must, on its appearance in the world of man, be regarded as a punishment on sin; while this, too, can as little be questioned, that already was revealed to the first sinner, in the clearest light, the mercy of God as well as His holiness and justice.

5. We should judge quite incorrectly of the *more extended consequences* of the first sin, if we thought that from that moment moral corruption sprang at once into life in full force. This could only, from the nature of the case, be at first gradual, but still, by the force of the principle, in an ever increasing ratio. Even though—and this we may accept—the transgression was earnestly deplored; with the first purity was also lost internal peace, the power of love was destroyed, and where new conditions gave rise to new temptations, each succeeding disobedience must lead to further declension. The son of Adam bears his image, and that first son becomes a fratricide, and head of a race which was constantly departing more and more from God. The turning away from God brings habitually ruin as its consequence. Just as the lava hardens after it has broken from the crater, and in that state can never return to its source; so after the first fall, the history of mankind becomes likewise the history of the development of sin. Sin rules with an ever-increasing power from Adam to Noah, from Noah again to Moses, from Moses to Christ, and even where He in principle subdues its power, its rule continues prolonged, apparently unchangeable. It is a wide stream, to whose source we cannot reach without placing ourselves once more in the lost paradise. Such a continuity would thus at once bring us involuntarily to the thought of a very close connexion; and when we begin to ask after this, we find a confirmation of the declaration of the Christian philosopher: "Le dogme chrétien de la chute de l'humanité renferme la doctrine philosophique qui rend le mieux compte à la

[7] Gen. iii. 7, 8.

raison des données de l'experience, à l'occasion desquelles se pose le problême du mal" (Naville).

6. After all that has been said, we can hardly estimate highly enough the great *importance* of the narrative of the first sin. It supplies an answer to a question which we cannot put on one side, an answer whose inner truth as far as concerns the chief matter, notwithstanding the mystery in its particulars, recommends itself both to the thoughtful understanding and the speaking conscience. It stands there as an indestructible testimony against all Dualism and Manichæism, but also against all Pelagianism and Optimism in its varying forms. It casts a true light over man, as the fallen king of creation, and offers us the only fitting key to all the aspirations and the pains of his internal and external life. Lastly, it may be called, in so far as it exhibits in essence and character the image of every sin, with its consequences, not merely a most remarkable, but an eternal history. What marvel that not merely Theologians, but philosophers too, of all schools of thought, agree in their high estimation of a record, which, if it were destroyed, would make the history of our race a labyrinth without entrance or exit?

Comp. LANGE, KURTZ, DELITZSCH, KEIL, and others on Gen. iii.; the *third* supplement to THOLUCK'S *Lehre von der Sünde;* K. H. SACK, *Psychol. Moral. Bemerkungen mit Bezug auf den Sündenfall*, Stud. und Krit. (1869), ii.; STEINER, *Die Bibl. Erzählung vom Sündenfall* (1870); and, as regards the traditions of other nations, H. LUEKEN, *a. a. O.*, p 74, etc. Upon the whole subject, study BL. PASCAL, *Pensées.*

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Closer definition and defence of the historical interpretation of Gen. iii.—What opinion must we form as to the serpent and its probable speech?—How far can the first sin be called the fruit of anticipation and impatience?—Explanation of Gen. iii. 14—19, compared with Rom. viii. 19—23.—The history of the fall and the temptation in the wilderness.—Testimonies to the high estimation of the history of Paradise at different times and in different schools of thought.

II. 1. To the question whether there is a real *connexion* between this first and every later sin, the Scriptures of the New Testament give us a sufficiently plain affirmative reply. Specially does St. Paul give us light on this point, in Rom. v. 12—21, cp. with 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. Both expressions testify most decidedly that our sin as well as our death stands in the closest connexion with that of Adam. By one man—thus must we understand his words, which are here of the utmost significance, by one man (the father of mankind) has sin (as a fatal and hostile power) come into the world (so that it therefore existed already elsewhere), and by sin death (physical death, with its consequences), and death has passed on all men; for that (ἐφ' ᾧ, Fr. parce que, cf. 2 Cor. v. 4) they all (even themselves) have sinned. How this sinning of all is properly speaking connected with that of Adam, the Apostle does not point out here at once, but it is deduced, besides from the entire comparison between Adam and Christ, specially from v. 19, where he says that by the transgression of that one man many were made[8] sinners, *i.e.*, became sinners, and were treated as such. Thus, in consequence of their natural relationship to Adam, they also transgress and die in

[8] κατεστάθησαν.

conjunction with him. St. Paul does not only mean that one man was the first sinner, whose example has now been followed by all; for then would the entire contrast between that which came from the first and the second Adam be here at once out of place. Still less does he teach that all have already sinned *in* Adam, so that his act might be considered even as their own; not that we were already in Adam, but that Adam is in us, in so far, *e.g.*, as the germ continues to live in the fruit, is his expressed meaning. Two streams reveal themselves to his eye (on the one side sin and death, on the other grace and life), sprung from two entirely opposed personal fountains. No reason at all exists for considering this statement of his as the fruit of an earlier rabbinical theological standpoint, of little or no importance for a proper Christian Dogmatics. On the contrary, by thus expressing such images as an Apostle, St. Paul has unenigmatically shown, that in his estimation these were something infinitely higher than purely scholastic conceptions. They find their root really in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, agree completely with the teaching of Jesus,[9] are also soon after presented by Paul himself in other forms,[10] and besides, carry in them their own recommendation, because they are emphatically supported by both reason and experience. Indeed, it appears again and again, "nous naîssons injustes, car chacun tend à soi, et la pente vers soi est le commencement de tout désordre" (Pascal).

2. When we, thus taught by the light of Holy Scripture, speak of original sin, we use a word which may undoubtedly be misunderstood and mocked, but which plainly enough points to the sinful nature of the human race, which every member of the same now possesses from his birth. This innate sinfulness (*vitium originis* as it is first called by Tertullian, *De animâ*, cap. 41) was without reason denied by the British monk Pelagius (409), who, just as Cœlestius (412), opposed the Hamartology of Augustine, and took offence at his pious prayer, "Da quod jubes, et jube quod vis." According to his view, neither the sin nor death of his descendants was to be explained by that of the first Adam. "There is in our souls," so he taught, "a certain natural holiness, if I may so call it. Neither evil nor good is born with us, but is wrought in us." Young children thus are still always in the condition in which Adam was before his transgression, except that they, too, are exposed to the unfavourable influence of bad teaching and example. By long custom in sin mankind has undoubtedly declined; but still an inherited corruption, properly so called, need not on that account be accepted. This doctrine, first condemned at Carthage (412), and afterwards at Ephesus, at the same time with Nestorianism (431), and also in its semi-Pelagian development (by Cassianus and Faustus of Riez), at the synod at Orange, in 529, has even after this found much support. Not a few, in particular among the later Scholastics, inclined to semi-Pelagian views, among them particularly Scotus and his supporters, and soon afterwards Erasmus and others; so that Thomas Bradwardine, Archbishop of Canterbury († 1349) could declare "that almost all the world has fallen into the error of Pelagius." Just as little as the Socinian and Arminian Theologians in and after the Reformation, was the Romish Church free from the

[9] John iii. 6; viii. 44. [10] Ephes. ii. 3.

Pelagian leaven; according to it, death indeed, but not the corruption of our nature, was a fruit of Adam's transgression; while according to the view of the former, the children have received the germ of evil from their own parents, but not from the first sinner. The Rationalism, too, of the present century explained the entire doctrine as a "commentum, in quo tanta ad virtutis studium deprimendum vel plane exstinguendum inest vis" (Wegscheider). The well-known saying of Rousseau, "Retournons à la nature," from this standpoint becomes the utterance of the highest wisdom.

With injustice has the authority of St. James been appealed to in favour of the Pelagian theory (§ lxxiv. 3), though it cannot be denied that the strictly moral tendency which it represents to a certain degree attaches itself thereto. But with St. Paul, at any rate, it is in irreconcilable contradiction, and a tolerable explanation of Rom. v. 12—21 cannot be given from this standpoint. Pelagianism may to a certain extent explain different sins; but sin as a principle and power remains a mystery to it. In this it starts from an absolutely atomistic conception, misunderstands the constant direct relation between God and man, as well as the proper nature of Christianity, and in its legitimate consequences leads to an entire rejection of the Gospel of salvation. We cannot be surprised that it has in every age repelled the most profound minds; its greatest strength has been derived from the weak sides of the opposite system.

3. As little, however, as the doctrine of Pelagius, is that of Augustine, the pure expression of Evangelical truth. According to it, in consequence of Adam's fall, all mankind has become a "massa perditionis." They were in his loins, "in lumbis Adæ," just as, according to Hebrews vii 9, 10, Levi was in those of Abraham when he paid homage to Melchizedek. *Omnes fuimus in illo uno, quando fuimus ille unus* (D.C.D. viii. 14). The universal corruption of our nature is, according to Augustine, the punishment of the sin of Adam. Sin is the fruit of the desire which is transmitted by propagation from one generation to another. This original sin is washed away in infant baptism; though the original taint remains, and rules over man to such a degree that he is left no other freedom than a freedom to evil.—Undoubtedly in this system, the fruit of sorrowful self-knowledge and painful experience, we cannot fail to recognise deep moral earnestness; whence it arises that, even in the midst of violent conflict and opposition, it has long survived its founder. Supported in a mild form, specially for practical reasons, by Gregory the Great, and afterwards, in the ninth century, developed by the French monk, Gottschalk, to its utmost limits, and in this form condemned by the Synod at Mayence (848), it met with no less powerful friends in the best of the Scholastics and Mystics of the Middle Ages, later on in the Reformers and the Reformed Churches of the Calvinistic tendency, and in the Romish Church in the Jansenists and Port Royalists. It merited this distinction by its laudable endeavour to regard sinful humanity as an organic whole, and it has without reason been unconditionally rejected as an unripe fruit of the earliest Manichæan standpoint of the Father. This accusation he himself refutes by the express declaration that he viewed original sin, not as something substantially in man, but as something accidental (a *vitium, languor, affectionalis qualitas, substantia accidens*). Much nearer to the truth is he, indeed, than Pelagius, with all his

allied friends. Therefore must we the more regret that scriptural proof of the proper core of his system is entirely wanting. His translation of Rom. v. 12, "in whom" (*in quo*) all have sinned, is absolutely indefensible, and the force which he here claims for baptism can as little be proved from the words of the Lord, as from those of His first witnesses. Even the words of the prophet in Hosea vi. 7 contain merely a comparison, and nothing more. The hypothesis, that already on account of Adam's sin alone all mankind is doomed to corruption, is in irreconcilable conflict with every rational representation of God's holiness and justice. Of a self-conscious assent to Adam's transgression nobody has the slightest knowledge, and the hypothesis that all mankind was actively included in him, leads thus inevitably to the arbitrary hypothesis of the so-called Covenant of Works of Coccejus and his school, which has not incorrectly been called a "judicial artifice." Still less can the views of Augustine satisfy us in every point, because he did not, as we should have expected, favour the theory of the Traducians,[11] but preferred that of the Creationists, and thus from his standpoint was involved in fresh difficulty. Undoubtedly the constant resistance which he called forth, though often unreasonable, was notwithstanding relatively just.

4. In order to avoid these two extremes, the hereditariness as well as the imputability of the first sin, about which there has always been so much dispute, must be definitely placed in the light of Holy Scripture. It teaches, *that all our race, in consequence of the first transgression, is in a sinful state, which by natural descent passes over from parents to their children, and makes us deserving of God's holy displeasure.*[12] *Because all have sprung from Adam, all are with him subject to sin and death.* He is the natural progenitor of mankind (*caput naturale* not *seminale*, as Augustine, or *fœderale*, as Coccejus asserts), and continues to live in each son, as the root of the tree in its stem and branches, leaves and fruit. Every new birth is only a new individualising of the same nature, and as has been very well said, "In Adam a person made nature sinful, in his posterity nature made persons sinful" (Anselm). No less, but also no more, than this is declared by the combined testimony of Scripture and Experience, while, from this standpoint alone, we comprehend sufficiently why He, who was to be the second Adam, must in an extraordinary manner appear in human flesh. The manner in which this moral corruption is transmitted from parents to children is nowhere pointed out in the Gospel, and is beyond the reach of our experience; "nec putamus, necessarium esse inquirere" (Conf. Gall., art. x.). The theory of the Traducians explains a part indeed, though not all, but the fact itself is no less incontestable, and finds its illustration at least in the phenomenon constantly repeated, that defects of body or of character continue in the same line for years and centuries. Thus far then we may speak, next to an hereditary taint, of an hereditary suffering of sinful humanity.

5. Something different, however, is it with hereditary *guilt*, which means something quite distinct from hereditary taint. Without any doubt even the innate tendency to evil must be wrong in God's eye, and so far every impurity obtains His holy displeasure. Still that, which according to the

[11] Section lxvii. 3. [12] Comp. Heid. Cat., Ans. vii.

severest rule would be sufficient to make us condemned before God, is yet not on that account a ground for actual condemnation. An immediate imputation of Adam's sin itself, as a personal guilt even of the new-born babe and the ignorant heathen, is nowhere taught by the Gospel. Of real guilt there can be no question, where no personal assent to the evil which was wrought existed, and where even the possibility was wanting to change the supposed condition. Rightly therefore did Zwingle already object to the dogma of *original guilt* in this form; and Melancthon remarks, "Cum peccato originali semper simul sunt peccata actualia." The hereditary taint becomes actually the ground of condemnation, only when, and in so far as, it shows itself in a personal transgression of the law. Thus Holy Scripture teaches,[13] and the proof that has been derived from Rom. v. 16, in favour of an opposite view, vanishes when we observe that the word *schuld* (guilt) has been arbitrarily introduced by the Dutch translators in the first member of the sentence, while κρῖμα in the second must be translated by *judgment*, and not by *sin*. As far as concerns the hereditary curse in Exod. xx. 4, 5, we must remember that here national transgression was being treated of rather than personal, and that where a curse is hereditary in families, and affects even those relatively innocent,[14] still from such temporal misfortune we can permit no deduction of eternal misery. The last can only be the consequence of personal disobedience, while even in this domain the proposition of Pelagius remains true, "Deus, qui propria peccata remittit, aliena non imputat." Undoubtedly the sentence of death has passed on all, even on young children, and in that has been shown in a touching manner God's righteous judgment on the sinfulness of our whole race. But, on the other hand, we must just as little forget that the wages of sin is at least both a natural consequence of man's disposition and condition, and that there is given to a child, even without its knowledge, a sign and token of deliverance in Christ. Our sinful *nature* even makes us punishable before God, in so far as we have *nursed* the perverted nature by mistake or negligence, not in so far as we were apart from our choice *born* with such disposition. It is therefore also absolutely needless to assume[15] that man in a pre-worldly state, of his free choice (*eine intelligibele Urthat*) assented to Adam's transgression, and thereby received the (otherwise inexplicable) consciousness of guilt. Of a condition and assent like this we have as little conception as consciousness; the Bible does not speak a word about it, and our conscience accuses us only of that which we are and do, or leave undone, in consequence of the sinful determination of our own will. We can here speak[16] of a "joint guilt and joint act of all mankind," only when we connect at once with the domain of innate sin, that of actual sin.

6. Viewing the doctrine of hereditary sin in this light, our decision as to the conception of it held by the Romish Church cannot possibly be favourable. By hereditary taint it understands only man's natural repugnance to God, which has sprung from the want of the extraordinary gifts (the *donum superadditum* of the *justitia originalis*). It recognises indeed an

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[13] Gen. xviii. 25; Ezra xviii. 2—4; Rom. v. 13.
[14] Louis XVI. and XVII., and Louis XIV. and XV.
[15] J. Müller.
[16] Schleiermacher.

inclination to evil, a violence done to nature, which shows itself as an evil desire; yet this last it considers then first as sin when it breaks out in a particular forbidden act. From this standpoint innate sinfulness is thus something purely negative, from which we are besides entirely cleansed by baptism. From the Evangelical Protestant view, on the contrary, in accordance with the Apostle Paul,[17] the natural sinful desire is at once regarded as positive sin, and it is confessed that this deeply rooted disease, in whatever degree it is not to be imputed to the children of God, is "not entirely put away" even by such a blessed means of grace as Baptism. Though from time to time some Symbolical Writings[18] have expressed themselves on this point with a certain "excess," this may in great part be attributed to the desire to confess with the greatest earnestness the absolute damnability of sin in every form. In the Calvinistic "Confession de Péché," the dogma we are treating of finds an expression which reflects with excellent accuracy the spirit of the Gospel and the Reformation.

7. We cannot be surprised that a doctrine like this, even with the utmost attempts to express it purely and with moderation, is rejected from different sides, but just as little need we reply to the different objections which have been alleged against it, alternately from the theological and the anthropological standpoint. As far as regards the first, we may point to that which has been already stated (§§ lxiii., lxxi.) in justification of the authority of God in the permission of sin and its consequences. God, who, though foreseeing everything, has yet not prevented evil, could and might thus act, the rather because He also knew that evil from its nature was ordained to final defeat, as the good effected by Him was destined to final victory.

As for the anthropological objections, they to a great degree arise from this, that man often regards himself too atomistically, and even this makes his natural egotism apparent. Mankind ought rather to be regarded as a *whole*, and the idea of solidarity with all mankind to be well understood. The unity here meant, is not that of the heap of sand, with its separate grains, but that of the tree with its leaves, of the stream with its waves, of the chain with its links; of course, in such a sense, however, that the right and power of individuality be never overlooked. Where the question is thus put, whether it were not better that each one should be tried by himself, the counter question will at least be allowed, whether such a thing could have been done without a constant miracle, and whether in that case a more favourable issue could have been justly expected? Undoubtedly the omniscient God has foreseen the contrary, and chosen the way for mankind which could best lead it through the depths to the designed heights.—If it be said, that by recognising this dogma the guilt of sin vanishes, since man in his corrupted state could not help sinning, the difference between action and condition is overlooked. That we are born in a condition which constantly urges to disobedience, does surely not depend upon ourselves; but so long as the force of reason and conscience even in sinful man is something more than an empty sound, the responsibility will continue ours if we do not struggle against our corrupt nature, and do not conquer it in the strength of God.[19] "It does not depend upon us whether we will not

[17] Rom. vii. 7. [18] Confess. Gall., Art. xxi.; Confess. Augsb., Art. xi. [19] Matt. xxiii. 37.

be sinners at all, but within this restriction exists a freedom, within this service God makes a proper personal decision possible for us" (Riggenbach). —And, lastly, if we complain that it is indeed hard to be born under such a ban in this sinful world, we deserve the reply given in Rom. ix. 20, and also entirely overlook that even entirely without our co-operation or desert a salvation has been prepared for us in Christ, which, when compared with Adam's sentence, calls forth the words of adoring surprise, "O felix culpa, quæ tantum ac talem meruit habere Redemptorem!" (Augustine). In conclusion, it is also not the question whether every objection can be satisfactorily solved, but whether it is possible to explain the origin of sin in mankind in a better way. To this question, at any rate, we can only reply in the negative; and thus must we rest in a partial explanation, or renounce all hope of explanation. "Original sin is folly in the sight of man, but this folly is wiser than all the wisdom of man. For without it who could have said what man is? His whole condition depends on this imperceptible point" (Pascal).

8. The dogma, now discussed, is of preponderating importance as a bulwark on one side against Romanism, on the other against Rationalism. The reproach which the Reformers had already cast upon Rome "that it resisted the little failings of mankind, but did not think of the deep corruption of nature," still remains the great charge which the believing Protestant brings against the theory and, above all, against the practice of the erring mother-church, but at the same time a powerful weapon in this necessary strife. In opposition to Rationalism and Naturalism, the recognition of the deep corruption of man by sin still remains the starting-point of the doctrines, of special revelation, of gracious redemption, of personal regeneration. He who concedes the sin of Adam with all its consequences, has thus granted "the whole of the old Theology" (H. Lang), or rather the entire Apostolic Gospel. This recognition is, however, then first of the right stamp when it leads to deep humility in ourselves, a tender judgment upon others, and a thankful estimation of God's grace in Him who is come "that He might destroy the works of the Devil."[20] Yet —this leads us on to a still darker depth of our investigation.

Compare the observation on Rom. v. 12—21, in *The Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, Eng. trans., p. 272; and also G. J. WIGGERS, *Versuch einer pragmat. Darstellung des Augustinianismus und Pelagianismus* (1833); W. VERWEIJ, *Vergelijking van het Stelsel van Augustinus met dat van Paulus, Waarheid in Liefde* (1839), iii.; T. REITSMA, *Over de voordeel. en nadeel. werking van de Aug. en Pel. righting in de Chr. Kerk*, in the *Jahrbb. voor wet. Theol.* (1853), p. 301, *sqq.*; C. J. RIGGENBACH, *Die Erbsünde*, in his *Apologet. Beiträge* (1863), pp. 115—143; E. BERSIER, *La Solidarité*, Eng. trans. (1870), pp. 12—70.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Further development and elucidation of Rom. v. 12, *sqq.*—History of the doctrine of original sin before Augustine, and in the Middle Ages.—Its importance for the theology of the Reformation.—Its later development and present condition.—The importance of Christian baptism in connexion with this doctrine.—Is not the innocence of childish years in conflict with its meaning?—The pre-existence theory of J. Müller.—The danger of exaggeration, misconception, and misapplication of the truth in this domain.—How can this subject be best treated homiletically?

[20] 1 John iii. 8.

SECTION LXXVI.—ITS ORIGIN IN THE SPIRIT WORLD.

The first human sin is the consequence of a temptation, of which the Author must be sought for in a spirit world which has rebelled against God, the existence and power of which is most indubitably attested by Holy Scripture. Reason, when it denies the possibility of that existence, and the operation of that power, goes beyond its right; but Christian science, too, while endeavouring to explain the ultimate ground of the origin of moral evil, meets in this dark sphere with impassable limits.

1. If sin be as little from God, as solely from man, it must then either be absolutely inexplicable, or be ascribed to a power hostile to God. Thus the consideration of the historical origin of evil leads us of itself to that of its metaphysical origin. It is already in some degree clear from the narrative of the Old Testament that we must here really think of a suprahuman tempter. The hostile power, which is here seen speaking and acting,[1] is plainly older than man, and in its nature not merely animal, but spiritual-dæmonic; and the punishment, too, which is threatened to the tempter, would at least sound incomprehensible, if there had not here been something more than a common serpent. We meet already in the Rabbinical Theology with traces of a deeper conception, which appears afterwards to have passed over from the Israelites to the Persians; and in the book of Wisdom[2] we meet with a representation that "death is come into the world through the envy of the devil." It is, however, specially the word of the Lord itself which gives us the courage to think of a fatal influence of the spirit world, and to testify of the first man, "Diaboli blasphemiis abreptus, quantum in se erat, exinanivit totam Dei gloriam" (Calvin). The proof-passage John viii. 44, we cannot conceive of but as a deeply significant reference to the history of Paradise, nor can we understand in any other way the hints which St. Paul throws out in 2 Cor. xi. 3, 14. In the Apocalyptic designation of Satan as the old serpent,[3] the same view is shadowed forth, which is neither directly nor indirectly contradicted by a single word in the New Testament. When in connexion with this we observe what we there read as to the attempt of the arch-fiend to overthrow even the second Adam, and as to his constant fatal influence, both in the world and in the Church of the Lord, everything combines to produce the belief that man, "lending his ear to the words of the devil," committed the first sin; and we see a light fall upon the history of Paradise which to a certain degree removes the obscurity, but which, on the other hand, dazzles our eyes.

2. That an explanation like this in its turn rouses suspicions is nothing

[1] Gen. ii. 15 (cf. שָׁמַר); iii. 1. [2] Wisdom ii. 24. [3] Rev. xii. 9; xx. 2.

more than natural, but at the same time it is evident that these can be, at least to a certain extent, satisfactorily answered. To the *theological* difficulty that God should have permitted an evil spirit—even when its existence and operation is considered as possible—to destroy His most glorious work, we may answer by pointing to what we have already said concerning the problem of liberty. If God has permitted evil in the human world, it is not absurd that He should tolerate it also in the spirit world, which cannot in any way be conceived of as a mere kingdom of automata.—If any find it here *anthropologically* inexplicable that the first man listened to a temptation like this, since in truth as yet no inclination to evil was found in the guileless heart, we will not deny the difficulty; but, on the other hand, we observe that this relative inexplicability properly belongs to the essence of sin. Evil has no ground of existence, but only a beginning; it is the child of self-will which is unreasonable and immoral. "Defectionis ratio sufficiens deficit. Causam defectionis, cum efficiens non sit, sed deficiens, invenire velle, tale est ac si quisquam velit videre tenebras aut audire silentium. Ita nesciendo scitur, ut sciendo nesciatur" (Augustinus, D.C.D. xii. 7, 9). —And lastly, if the pneumatological difficulty is adduced, How then could the evil one himself have fallen? we must repeat the answer just given. "Oculus nusquam tenebras vidit, nisi ubi cœperit non videre, et silentium nullo modo nisi non audiendo sentitur" (Augustine). But even though the question must remain entirely unanswered, this gives us no reason for misapprehending the relative light which rises from the opened spirit world as to the origin of sin in the *human* world; it is with this last that we have here to do, and the key we employ we have not indeed ourselves forged, but received from trustworthy hands. One curtain we see here removed, whereby a new world is opened to us, from which we may not turn away our eyes, even if we discover in the background another impenetrable veil.—In no case can we say that the recognition of the Satanic origin of sin annihilates the guilt of man's first transgression. The feeling of guilt awakened in Adam and Eve loudly declares the contrary; and even more especially is it true of the first working of Satan upon the still uncorrupted man, "persuadere potest, præcipitare non potest" (Jerome). The great question which alone demands further treatment here, is that as to the credibility of the existence and operation of a higher hostile power, such as seems here to be presupposed. That question can only be answered through a somewhat more extended digression on *Satanology* and its import in the domain of Christian Hamartology. We have before observed, in § lvii., why we have so long postponed this discussion. We are concerned here in no way with a purely ontological, but with an ethical and psychological question. We attach to it importance, not so much because it satisfies our curiosity with regard to the spirit world, but above all, because it affords us a deeper insight into the origin and nature of moral evil. If such insight can in this way be gained, then may the Christian Theologian even not refuse the less pleasant task of being an "advocatus diaboli." It is always better, if needs be, to look an unpopular truth in the face, than to belong to the number of those who are characterised in the words of the poet—

> "The people would not suspect it was the devil,
> Even if he had them by the throat."—Goethe.

3. If we thus begin here also with inquiring into the doctrine of the New Testament, then is it not difficult to gather into one well-compacted whole the hints which are scattered through its pages. Thus the Lord, as well as His Apostles, speaks constantly of an evil spirit, denoted by various names, as Satan (opposer), Beelzebub (god of flies), Beelzebul (dung god), Belial (good for nothing), but everywhere the head and lord of lower evil spirits (dæmons), enemies to the honour of God, and the salvation of mankind. A complete survey of the Biblical Satanology is here neither necessary nor possible: enough that the Lord represents the Father the devil, as a homicide from the beginning and the arch-liar,[4] and asserts that he—so it reads literally—does not *stand* in the truth,[5] because there is no truth in him. The sphere in which he lives and moves is not that of truth, but of wilful lying. How long this has been so, Jesus does not say, but St. John testifies[6] that he sinneth from the beginning, in other words, as long as there has been sin. In other places, too,[7] we hear of angels who kept not their first estate, but sinned; and if now we join to these another significant statement of St. Paul,[8] we appear thus obliged to hold, that pride even in this domain has been the cause of the most fatal fall. Of these fallen angels the devil is called the head,[9] the abyss their abode,[10] but not less a certain freedom their portion, so that they are also said to people the air;[11] and separated into different classes, they fight in union against the Kingdom of God. Their nature was thus originally like that of the good angels, but is now once for all degenerated, and their condition hopelessly wretched. To this power is attributed, besides the first sin, especially the first fratricide,[12] the treachery of Judas,[13] and the constant resistance to the Kingdom of God and His servants.[14] It rules the world, but is besides constantly a source of danger to the Christian,[15] and will first at the end of the ages, after the last violent struggle, be destroyed for ever.[16] For so long the devil is and will be tempter, accuser, and corrupter of men, evil not relatively but absolutely, however much in his most violent raging dependent on a higher power.[17] Watchfulness and prayer against his destructive influence is thus continually and most emphatically enjoined.[18]

4. This Christian Dæmonology offered too much food for ardent imaginations, and on the other hand left too many difficulties for the philosophically developed intellect, to allow it to escape the danger, on one side, of being *developed* in a more or less arbitrary way, and on the other side of being most sharply combated and derided. Actually, however, the history of the doctrine admits of several more proofs than can be mentioned here. Against Gnostics and Manichæans the Christian Church has maintained with proper tact the fall of the angels, and considered as its cause, in addition to pride, envy and sensuality. With many of the fathers especially was developed the doctrine of the power of dæmons, who were characterised by Origen as "God's executioners." The hope, however, of the

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[4] John viii. 44.
[5] οὐχ ἕστηκεν.
[6] 1 John iii. 8.
[7] Jude 6; 2 Pet. ii. 4.
[8] 1 Tim. iii. 6.
[9] Matt. xxv. 41.
[10] Jude 6.
[11] Ephes. vi. 12.
[12] 1 John iii. 12.
[13] John xiii. 2.
[14] 2 Cor. ii. 10, 11.
[15] 1 Pet. v. 8.
[16] Rev. xx. 2, 10.
[17] Rev. xii. 12.
[18] Matt. vi. 13; James iv. 7.

last-named of the repentance of the Devil was very soon condemned as heretical. According to Augustine and Anselm[19] must the creation of the human world have been a kind of compensation for the fall of the angels, in order to fill up the void thus caused; and according to the view of the Bogomili, Satan was originally nothing less than the elder brother of Christ. How much superstition in particular the Middle Ages have nourished in this domain can here be only called to mind, and without enlarging. Even the lively fancy of Luther recognised in this respect neither limits nor bounds. "A Christian will know that he sits in the very midst of devils, and that the Devil is closer to him than his coat or shirt, or even than his own skin. If any one dies of the plague, is drowned, or falls dead, this is the work of the Devil." With much more sobriety and calmness did Calvin express himself on this point[20] when the occasion presented itself, while he viewed the subject more particularly from its practical side. It continued, however, to be recognised by the orthodox, Romanists as well as Protestants; and not slight was the offence, when B. Bekker († 1698), in his "Betooverde Wereld," assailed the traditional doctrine with the weapons of the Cartesian philosophy. He paved the way for the later rationalistic negation, on the part of Semler and his allies. The opposition to the trials of witches became ever more an opposition to Holy Scripture itself, and however much the Supranaturalism of the former century continued to maintain even here its declarations in principle, confidence was shaken, and the sympathy for the doctrine disappeared almost at once. The severe criticism of Schleiermacher[21] strengthened many in their denial, and made them believe that the whole question might not be properly called a theologico-dogmatic one. And yet we now hear from his school the first voices of importance again raised in favour of the dogma. Its maintenance, in different modes by Twesten and Nitzsch, as well as Martensen and Lange, was supported from the philosophic side, among others, by Daub and Schelling, and from the theosophic by Rothe and Keerl. On the other hand, the modern Naturalism flatters itself with a most easy triumph of her negation, and a belief, considered as absolutely indispensable on the extreme right, is called, not merely by the left, but even by many in the centre, quite superfluous. In such a condition a new revision of the arguments, pro and contra, is by no means superfluous. "Adhuc sub judice lis est."

5. Only frivolity can deny that the subject has its very mysterious sides for thoughtful faith, so that even if the scale inclines to the right side, it does so only after some wavering; and this is the case, not only because of the uncertainty of all Pneumatology in itself, but also because of the peculiar character of the scriptural doctrine with respect to the evil spirit and his kingdom. Most of the utterances exhibit a purely incidental, others a poetical figurative character. Not a few reflect a popular belief, whose origin and value has been very differently estimated; some again occur in Scriptures of disputed authenticity, such as the second Epistle of St. Peter and that of St. Jude. In this state of things it is at least unadvisable to exalt the agreement with, or doubt upon, this particular point to a

[19] Anselm, De casu diaboli. [20] *Inst.* i. 14, 15. [21] *Der Christliche Glaube*, §§ xlii.—xlv.

Shibboleth in the Christian creed. Salvation, in the end, depends upon belief in Christ, not upon belief in the devil. Yet Christ has even on this subject uttered sayings, which we are not free to overlook; and if here, too, and not for the first time, faith is brought to a severe trial, on the other hand in the denial of unbelief there is not a little which can be answered, or at least qualified.

6. This is at once evident, when we look at the *exegetical* difficulties, which are often too highly exaggerated. That Scripture in reality partly presupposes, partly teaches expressly, the existence of a world of spirits in rebellion against God, may be regarded as an axiom in exegetical investigation. The days are gone by when men thought of the tempter in Matt. iv., as a scribe, or of the principalities and powers in Eph. vi., as hostile Jews. Even if we could in this manner explain away a few proofs, a far larger number would remain. That it is the wicked one who sows the bad seed, is most expressly declared by the Lord,[22] not merely in a parable, but also in the explanation of a parable. He presents the working of the devil in direct connexion with His own approaching suffering,[23] and for us at least it is impossible to see in a word of warning, such as Luke xxii. 31, 32, nothing more than a mere poetical figure. The reasons which have been already brought forward in treating of Angelology against the idea of accommodation to the popular idea and error,[24] retain here also undiminished force. In the circle of His trusted disciples the Lord speaks about Satan and his kingdom, just as He spoke to the ignorant multitude; and that He Himself believed in its existence is in our view placed beyond all doubt. Upon this point the Apostles are in accord with one another and their Master. If it be true, that upon certain points of Dæmonology (*e.g.*, the present abode of evil spirits) diverse statements are met with in the New Testament; even though these could not be brought into accord, it would at the utmost follow that this particular point was enigmatical, but not yet that the whole subject was unscriptural, and still less inadmissible. In this domain exegetical notes of interrogation will continue to be seen in abundance, but it is impossible by means of exegesis to banish Satanology from Dogmatics.

7. As to the *historical* objections; it is said first of all, that Satanology is not an element in the Divine revelation of the Old Testament, but contains an image which was derived in later times by the Jews from other nations, at the time of and subsequent to the Babylonian exile. The first must be granted, but as yet it proves nothing in itself against the truth of this statement. Even the doctrine of a future life is not expressed by Moses or the Prophets as such, and yet it is for us more than a dream. It lies in the nature of evil, that it is not manifested by a holy God, but reveals and betrays itself by its fatal working. In the history of the world Satan is like the sea monster which lurks in the deep, but sometimes raises its head above the waves, whilst we can only discover the signs of its movements and direction from the undulation of the water. A premature discovery of the proper mystery of unrighteousness would only have promoted the worship of dæmons in Israel, and would thus have injured Monotheism.—

[22] Matt. xii. 19, 39. [23] Luke xxii. 53; John xiv. 30. [24] Section lvii. 3.

And as to the often-repeated assertion of the later origin of the dæmonological ideas, we must grant that during and after the Babylonian exile they were developed in many directions, but yet not, on that account, that before that time they were unknown in Israel. Even in writings composed before that time we meet with expressions which either probably or certainly prove the contrary. Think, for example, of the strict prohibition of sorcery, which is yet distinguished from soothsaying;[25] of the devils and spirits of the wilderness,[26] which in earlier and later times lived in the consciousness of the people; of Azazel,[27] to whom the scapegoat was sent on the day of atonement; of the evil spirit by whom Saul was tormented,[28] and by which in earlier times the people of Sichem was governed;[29] and, not to mention more, of Satan, by whom David was moved to number the people.[30] If this last was, according to 2 Sam. xxiv. 1, more directly brought about by God in His anger, the other account explains that narrative, but does not directly contradict it. In other passages, too,[31] Satan is permitted by the Almighty to bring about misfortunes, and he even appears still in the presence of God, though an opponent to be rebuked and punished.[32] In the book of Daniel, indeed, angels are mentioned, but not devils, and in no passage, where in the later writings of the Old Testament the dæmoniac power is specially mentioned, is this done in such a way as if mention was here made of an entirely new and hitherto unknown idea. It is, moreover, not in itself probable that the Jews received this idea from the Persians. We might perhaps declare with greater right the contrary; unless it be assumed that both these ideas had been drawn from a common source of older date. Besides, the Satanology of the Jews differs on this point from that of the Parsees in principle, since the latter displays a dualistic character which the former does not possess. In no passage, not even in John viii. 44, does Holy Scripture teach an eternal principle of evil; here everywhere is the prince of darkness the opposer, but at the same time the slave, of the kingdom of God. But why should we not recognise even in the Parsees' conceptions some broken rays of the light of a higher truth?[33] Finally, the great question for the Christian is, How has He expressed Himself on this subject, whom we revere as King of truth, even where He reveals the secrets of the spirit world? That which without the stamp of His authority would perhaps appear a mere popular conceit, is viewed in a different light when His word casts the deciding weight in the balance.

8. Indeed, there is not a single philosophical difficulty which should compel us to think here only of the effect of superstition and stupidity. Men find already (*a*) the idea of such an evil spirit an absurdity, but forget first of all to establish the right of reason to come to a decision *à priori* in this domain. If the spirit world is the kingdom of freedom, then must a fall be possible, and this fall will be deeper, in proportion as the height attained has been greater. Nor is great cunning and cleverness,

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[25] Lev. xix. 31; xx. 6.
[26] Lev. xvii. 7; Isa. xiii. 21; xxxiv. 14.
[27] Lev. xvi. 8.
[28] 1 Sam. xvi. 23.
[29] Judges ix. 23.
[30] 1 Chron. xxi. 1.
[31] Job i. 6, *sqq.*
[32] Zech. iii. 2.
[33] John i. 5.

allied with Satanic wickedness, in any way inconceivable, as an every-day history proves. Certainly a spirit thus highly developed, must more than any one else feel the folly of every resistance to God; but it is the sharpest sight which is often most completely blinded by sin.—If (*b*) this belief be considered as conflicting with the recognition of the supremacy and omnipresence of God, yet this is only the case when we retain a lower dualistic or pantheistic standpoint. From the theistic standpoint it is certain, that God continues supreme even over Satan, and though working everywhere, does not everywhere reveal His presence in the same manner; so that there may very well be in the infinite universe, as contrasted with the holy heaven, an abode of nothing but sin and misery. Again, it is considered (*c*) that at any rate the free operation, if not the existence, of evil spirits is impossible, improbable, and in any case irrecognisable. But here, if anywhere, will it be most fitting to call to mind the well-known words, "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy." With equal improbability could man of himself have conceived that God would admit sin into the human world, and yet His thoughts have been different to, and higher than, those of men. Nowhere, indeed, are we given an unmistakable sign by which we may distinguish a direct Satanic temptation from those which our hearts or the world offer, but the evil one works *in* and *through* these very two things; and two different factors may now and then work together, though we are not able to fix accurate limits to the two. Thus, *e.g.*, sickness may be brought about by atmospheric as well as physiological causes, without our being able to show where the one ends and the other begins.

If it be said (*d*) that all Dæmonology is a fruit of superstition, and dwindles with the increase of civilisation, then truth and error are confounded. It is in itself an unspeakable blessing that many a superstition on this point gives place to more reasonable ideas; but here, too, the truth itself did not vanish with the foolish legends former ages had combined with it. The antiquity and universality of the belief in evil spirits, may even be an internal evidence of its truthfulness; and there is a certain decay of belief, for example, in revelation and miracles, which is not the consequence of sound reasoning, but often merely of growing frivolity. Then is realised the truth of Göthe's words:

"Den Bösen sind sie los, die Bösen sind geblieben;"

and thus was the remark of prior ages true, that it is one of Satan's deepest designs to make men doubtful of his existence.—Certainly (*e*) the misuse of the doctrine has in every age been abundant and painful. Its principal cause was this, that traditional popular heathen sayings were mingled with biblical ideas, and thus too easily caused the drawing of caricatures which—might frighten children. But a dishonourable polemic such as this, which would rather have on its side laughers than thinkers, betrays its own weakness; and Jesus, at any rate, cannot be accused of this exaggeration when He chooses the fowls of the air[34] as images of the evil foe. The question is still important, whether the systematic resistance of this belief has produced as many blissful results as its superstitious maintenance.—Finally, (*f*) if it be said that the whole matter, properly viewed, is not of preponderating

[34] Matt. xiii. 4, 19.

value, again we run the risk of deciding too superficially. The question under discussion directly coincides in principle with another, whether our Lord and His witnesses deserve our confidence, even where their voice is heard in a domain which from the nature of the case lies entirely beyond the reach of our personal observation. But, besides, there is a great truth contained in Strauss' words,[35] "If Christ is come to destroy the works of the devil, He need not have come if there is no devil; if there is a devil, but only as the personification of an evil principle, then are we satisfied with a Christ as an impersonal Idea." It is at any rate a great question, whether we shall continue to recognise the necessity of a supranatural redemption, if we assert that we have no other strife than that against flesh and blood, and that sin only springs from man himself, without recognising a superhuman power of evil. He who has already lost the accurate conception of sin will also easily give up the Biblical Dæmonology, which cannot possibly be maintained by itself, but only in connection with the entire teaching as to God, and the cosmogony of the Bible. On the other hand, he who recognises the deep corruption by sin, will constantly be drawn back to the recognition of a personal power of evil, which is older than our race, and with respect to which Holy Scripture does not reveal much, but enough to let us have a single glance beyond the dark veil. For many a day to come will the superficial make merry over this dogma, while the thoughtful will return to it with continually increasing seriousness.

9. As regards the proper *nature* and *operation* of the evil spirits, a cautious gnosis will not attempt much definition. There is no ground for regarding them, with Lange, as spirits of the inhabitants of a perished world, but just as little for asserting, when we have once recognised the reality of a suprahuman sinful principle, that it only attains a concrete personality in its slaves and victims.[36] This last attribute must be definitely assigned to its supreme head; indeed, as has been well observed, the expression "father of lies" points back to an intelligence, a personal self-consciousness, and through this does the contest against evil first become a proper spiritual contest.[37] A common hostility to God has bound in a relative unity all its servants, however selfish or hostile to one another they may be in other ways. The revelations of the kingdom of darkness run as it were parallel to those of the kingdom of God. They are likewise seen at the fall,[38] at the redemption,[39] and even by-and-by at the end of the world.[40] Perhaps, in this way some light may be thrown on some mysterious pages of the Old Testament, as well as on the history of the Egyptian magicians, Balaam, the witch of Endor, etc. But certainly this dogma affords the most fitting key to the narratives of the Evangelical history concerning those possessed with devils. The superficial assertion that these were merely lunatics, incorrectly regarded by the popular view as possessed, is at any rate in conflict with remarkable facts. On the contrary, there is much which seems to justify the supposition that in the fulness of time there really was an extraordinary development of the power of the kingdom of darkness, of course, by the permission of a higher power. For

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[35] *a. a. O.* ii. 15.
[36] Mallet.
[37] Martensen.
[38] Gen. iii.
[39] Matt. iv.
[40] Rev. xx.

the very reason that this power is now broken, though not taken away, is it doubly rash to assert that what is not now observed any more in this form, could not possibly have happened in earlier ages. And who will prove that there are not now any who are possessed? Who will assure us that the power and craft of Satan will not increase as the great drama hastens to its end? A repentance of the evil one, such as the pious Lavater prayed for, we are not led to expect from the word of God. His image is not the suffering Abbadonna of Klopstock, but the Capaneus in Dante's Inferno,[41] the monster whom Virgil addresses, who may only be a restless fury, as his fitting punishment for his unbounded pride. But his destruction as a Power, which can no longer rule and threaten, is the prospect before the completion of the ages, which like a friendly ray colours this dark page in the history of the world.

10. We have already observed something of the *importance* of the dæmonological question. As the dark shadow of Angelology it extends our knowledge of the spirit world, and thus far allows us a new glance on the widespread domain of God's works. But it is of special and incontestable importance in connexion with the doctrine of sin. The *origin* of sin in man is better understood, if we may assume that a spirit has worked here which excelled man in cunning and craft. If the question, how this spirit himself could fall so low as to rebel against God, must remain unanswered, the same difficulty applies also to the existence of sin in man. Enough that sin has a history, older than that of this present world, and that no philosophy can construct this history *à priori*, nor deny it *à posteriori*.—The *nature* of sin is at the same time explained better in this way. It is here evident that it is as little the fruit of sensuousness as of want of development. Dæmonology acquaints us with spiritual beings, superior in intellect, but also in wickedness, to man, and thus shows us that we must not prefer to find the nature of sin where the superficial are so ready to look for it.—Moreover, the power of sin is more apparent when the eye penetrates so much further than this visible creation. All the works of darkness are together merely the revelations of a principle hostile to God, concentrated in a giant spirit, which like a Titan rages against God. "The proper devilishness of sin is this, that it *thus* modifies the first words of the Decalogue: I am *my* Lord and *my* God" (Luther). It is not love alone which can join together,—hate also can do it; and in this case the union has as its object nothing less than the destruction of the whole moral order of the world. Only one power is greater than this colossal coalition; it is that of Him who binds the evil one even where He leaves him relatively free, and who by His Son has condemned "the prince of this world." There is something overwhelming in the representation of such a kingdom of darkness, for which we cannot further indicate any limits; but at the same time there is in it something glorifying for man. There are sins committed by men, which can never have sprung of themselves in man's heart, but only in devils'. The world lieth *in* wickedness,[42] but is not yet wickedness itself. How fearful must the conflict have been which its prince has waged against the Light of the world, and still

[41] xiv. 49.

[42] 1 John v. 19.

continues to wage!—Even the *conflict* against sin is, by the recognition of the existence of this fatal power, at once excited and directed. That conflict does not cease, but then first in reality begins, when we become through faith the property of the Prince of Peace. The devil cares not to tempt those whom he feels he possesses by a perpetual right (Leo the Great). Hence the Lord and His Apostles constantly excite and arm the Church for this conflict.[43] By doing away with the existence and influence of the Evil One, we do not proceed one step: nor do we obtain the slightest pretext in excuse of the evil we have done. "If Satan were to speak, and God to be silent, you would have an excuse. But your ears are placed between a warning God and a suggesting serpent. Satan never ceases persuading towards evil, but neither does God cease advising towards good" (Augustine). The more sin is recognised as not merely something purely human, in a certain sense natural, but in its deepest essence dæmonic, the more seriously will the conflict be undertaken, but also the more certain at length will be the victory gained.[44]

11. In the *treatment* of this doctrine from the pulpit and in popular instruction the capacity and the wants of the flock are to be considered. "The doctrine of the devil, like so many others, is more fitted for the strong meat of the τέλειοι than for the milk of the νήπιοι."[45] Where its misuse as an excuse for sin must be strongly opposed, there from the other side we must be on our guard, as well against all naturalistic imaginings, as against the theosophic development of this doctrine, which would be wise above that which is written, and would often construct n e ntire cosmogony merely on the basis of a few indications of Holy Scripture, which are perhaps interpreted wrongly. There is an unbelief which gives evidence of superficiality; but there is also a superstition which rises higher and sinks deeper than it should, and which by its fantastic creations may evoke a dangerous reaction. The scriptural doctrine concerning "the depths of Satan" must not be connected with Astronomy and Cosmology, but rather with Hamartology, so that the discussion never loses its ethical character.

Compare the Art. *Teufel und Dæmonische*, in Herzog's *R. E.*, and the literature there quoted, as well as OOSTERZEE, *Leven v. Jezus*, ii. (2nd ed.), bl. 140—160. For the history of the doctrine, G. ROSKOFF'S *Geschichte des Teufels*, 2 vols. (1869), though written with negative tendencies, deserves recognition; Dr. A. RÉVILLE has published an abridgment of this in his *Histoire du Diable, etc.* (1870); G. L. HAHN furnishes an exact and extended survey of the Biblical doctrine in the *Theologie des N. T.* (1854), i., §§ 128—145; also LUECKE, *Ueber die Lehre vom Teufel*, in the *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Chr. Wissensch. u. Chr. Leben.* (1851), ii.; A. DISSELHOF, *Ueber die Geschichte des Teufels* (1870), a treatise in a conservative spirit. On the dogmatic and apologetic estimate of Dæmonology, we meet with hints meriting attention by TEICHMANN, in a treatise, *Die Voraussetzungen der Bibl. Lehre vom Satan*, in the *Beweis des Glaub.* (1870), p. 466, *sqq.*; compare also SANDER, *Die Lehre der H. S. vom Teufel, Evang. K. Z.* (1859), Nos. 7—9.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Meaning and force of John viii. 44.—Further discussion of the principal "Cruces interpretum" in the dæmonology of the Old and New Testaments.—How can we best explain the traditional antipathy to this dogma?—The possessed in the Gospel history.—Satanology and Theosophy.—Satanology and Theodicée.—Satanology and Christian Morality.—Satanology and Literature.

[43] Matt. xxvi. 41; Ephes. vi. 10—18. [44] Cf. *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 127. [45] Plitt.

SECTION LXXVII.—ITS POWER.

The sinful principle, thus originated, and to a certain extent explained, manifests itself in a transgression of law, which everywhere exhibits the same character, but under ever-changing forms, so that we must come to a closer examination and division of actual sins. Under all these varying forms, however, sin appears as a fatal Power, which penetrates and dominates the entire internal and external life of the individual man and of mankind, and in consequence, if not arrested in time, brings the sinner into a condition which becomes more and more sad, and, in the end, makes a victim of its slave.

1. If we have thus far searched for the origin of moral evil, we must now look upon its *Manifestation*, and observe the close connexion between different sins and innate inclination to sin. From the diseased root came, by the law of an internal necessity, the wild branches; and from these the poisonous fruits. At the very commencement we must here distinguish sins of sensuality from those of pride, and give heed to the peculiarities of each. In the first is revealed the power of the flesh, in the other the tendency of the spirit, as that is ruled by the sinful principle; the first in a falling, the other in a rising hue. The sins of sensuality relate, partly to the selfish enjoyment, partly to the possession, of that which is pleasant to flesh and blood. As a rule, we see the desire for enjoyment chiefly developed in earlier, and that of covetousness in later, years; and just as in both the sensual lust is positively revealed, so does it betray itself negatively in negligence, indolence, and sloth. The passion of sensuality is more or less of a social nature; that of pride, on the contrary, is unsocial and solitary; the first leads to association, the second to exclusion. By the one man becomes a beast, by the other he runs the risk of becoming a devil. The sins of pride show themselves partly in the intended or involuntary misleading of ourselves; partly in misconception, despising, and resistance of others in different forms and degrees; partly in rebellion against God, before whom the proud man will not bend, and from whom he cannot, however, entirely withdraw himself. From the concatenation of such desires and acts springs spontaneously a continuous sinful tendency of life, which is at last raised by constant development to an entire theoretical, or even practical, forgetfulness and desertion of God. Thus is revealed a mystery of unrighteousness, whose lowest depth can never be penetrated by our eye, a corruption which spreads from the centre of the heart to every point of the circumference. Even the rudest forms of sin are only the individualised revelations of the dominion of the flesh; and

in everything which man by his own corrupt nature desires, he seeks indeed himself alone. Under the preponderating influence of selfishness, natural inclinations become fatal passions, and even the virtues flow away in selfishness, as rivers to the ocean.

2. The multiplicity of sins already at an early date made men feel the want of a division of this unhappily too abundant material, according to a fixed principle. Different principles of classification have been proposed, but none of them are raised above fair objection. We may, for example, divide sins (*a*) with regard to the *object*, against whom it is wrought, into sin against God, our neighbour, and ourselves; in connexion with which we must, however, observe that all sins are indeed sins against God:[1] or (*b*) from the relation of the sinner to the *law*, into sins either of action or merely of negligence, while the first may again be split up into actions which are absolutely sinful, and into others merely relatively so. Both, however, coincide in most cases; he who acts dishonestly often neglects the duty of generosity, and so far the rule, "the omission of good is sin,"[2] is here applicable. Thirdly, (*c*) in proportion to the *manner* in which they are manifested, we speak, for the sake of distinction, of transgression in thought, word, and deed, a distinction which is so far good, that it takes some account, too, of the greater or less weight of the sin, though, on the other hand, they may indeed be the same transgressions which are wrought by heart, mouth, or hands. Without doubt, the best division is that (*d*) in which, more especially, the greater or less degree of *guilt* is duly brought into account. Thus there are on one side sins of ignorance, which may be more[3] or less[4] guilty, of rashness and weakness; on the other hand, those which are done on purpose and with reflection, and these may again be divided into excusable or absolutely inexcusable, while in this latter class we must think only of the sin against the Holy Ghost, upon which we shall treat hereafter at greater length. With considerable arbitrariness the Romish Church speaks of seven deadly sins, viz., pride, covetousness, sensuality, envy, gluttony, revenge, and negligence. Protestants, on the contrary, maintain with reason the great truth that all sin is in its nature damnable, and that even ignorance is punishable, in so far that it may never be called absolutely guiltless;[5] but that only obstinate unbelief will bring the sinner actually into a state of condemnation; as Luther says, "No sins can condemn a Christian man, save unbelief alone." We must entirely reject, as grounded on pure fancy, the old distinction between so-called dumb and crying sins, according to the old verse (with reference to Gen. iv. 10; xviii. 20; Exod. iii. 7; James v. 4):—

> "Clamitat ad cœlum vox sanguinis et Sodomorum,
> Vox oppressorum, mercesque retenta laborum."

in which, at any rate, the idea of the first-named cannot possibly be accurately defined. We might with the same right, after Isaiah i. 18, speak of sins which are red or not red.—But even still less may the definition of the old Stoics be granted (now and then followed in later times even on the part of Christians), that all sins are *equal*—unless by this it be

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[1] Ps. li. 4.
[2] James iv. 17.
[3] Luke xxiii. 34.
[4] Acts xxiii. 5.
[5] Luke xii. 48.

only asserted that all exhibit the general character of transgression of law. But besides, it lies in the nature of the case, that the punishability of one misdeed exceeds not a little that of another.[6] It is also self-evident that these and all other divisions are only applicable to actual sins, and not to habitual sin.[7]

3. Whatever measure, however, we make use of, it is evident that the *power* of sin upon the internal and external life of every man whom it rules, is as extensive as fatal. Where the heart, the fountain of life, has become the seat, not of love, but selfishness, then in consequence of this condition, unnatural in the higher sense of the word, is the conscience stained, disquieted, and only too soon dulled.[8] But by this the *intellect* is at the same time dimmed in the saddest manner, not in the natural domain, but even the more in the spiritual one. From the impure heart the mist rises up, which clouds the spiritual eye. In truth, the sinner knows neither God nor himself, and consequently condemns in others what he overlooks in his own bosom;[9] the blindness even may be so great that it in some degree serves as an excuse,[10] though, on the other hand, it leads to constantly fresh erring. In so far, indeed, does the clever sinner become a fool, that he shuts his eyes both to the highest truth, and to his own interest. The *will*, too, becomes ever more inclined to evil, and enchained to sin; in place of the *Vo*luntas the *No*luntas becomes continually stronger and stronger. Then also the *body* is naturally misused in the service of sin, so that its members become instruments of unrighteousness, and the good, intended by God, is made death.[11] The power of sin gains the summit of its influence in man, where he not merely does evil himself, but takes pleasure in the evil which he sees others do. Both the one and the other perfectly justify the description of the life without God given in Eph. iv. 17—19, and other passages. "Natura corrumpit personam."

4. "One sinner destroyeth much good."[12] This is specially seen where we regard the power of sin in the whole of mankind. It upsets the household, destroys society, and causes countless sorrows in the State, the Church, and the world. It reaches its climax when the man, already corrupt himself, becomes besides partaker in the sins of others,[13] and brings about those offences against which the Lord gives such express warning.[14] The words of St. James (iii. 5) are in a greater or less degree applicable to the history of the development of every sin. If some limiting power[15] did not stand in opposition to its influences, it would long ago have destroyed the humanity which it now taints and rules.

5. From these reasons we may say that man and mankind have lost their real life through sin, and, separated from God, live in a miserable state of death. In God is life, and separation from Him is thus inevitably loss of life, since love and life are one. The natural life, indeed, still goes on, as in the branch which is separated from the parent stem,

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[6] Compare Matt. xi. 20—24; John xix. 11.
[7] *Erfsmet.*
[8] 1 Tim. iv. 2; Titus i. 15.
[9] 2 Sam. xii. 5—7.
[10] 1 Tim. i. 13.
[11] Rom. vi. 13; vii. 13.
[12] Eccles. ix. 18.
[13] 1 Tim. v. 22.
[14] Matt. xviii. 6, 7.
[15] τὸ κατέχον; compare 2 Thess. ii. 6.

but spiritual death leads of itself to natural, just as this ends in eternal death. We must not, however, so conceive this, as if man, as the Lutheran confessions declare, had become like a lifeless trunk or stone. On this point, on the contrary, the Reformed Church, agreeing with Scripture and experience, has at all times maintained that the Divine grace works in man "not as in stocks or blocks," and has expressed it as her confession, "that by the fall man has not ceased to be man, gifted with intellect and will, and that sin has not done away with the nature of man, but corrupted it, and spiritually slain it" (*Can. Dord.* iii. iv. 4, 16). This condition of spiritual death, too, must also be so presented, that there remains a psychological possibility of awaking and resurrection, which is not only promised, but also demanded, in the Gospel.[16] So, too, we must not with the Lutheran Church assert that the reason of the natural mind has become "stock, star, and stone blind;" for Holy Scripture teaches the contrary.[17] But though nature as such is not destroyed by sin, it is still bound and corrupted in such a way that it cannot possibly develop its original capacity in a normal manner. Sin is in no way "the not as yet willing the good,"[18] because the sinner is still only partially developed in spirit, but the selfish desire for moral evil, which certainly does not seem to us morally good, but sensuously pleasant; sin is not our original nature, but such a perversion of it, that it, wherever it rules without restraint, has at length become a "second nature."[19] "The evil does not consist in this, that the fulness of life is not yet attained; but in this, that life has been broken up into fragments; that the holy unity which should reconcile and appease the various elements in the movement of life, is restrained and retarded in its activity. The history of the world is not on this account profane, becauses it realises other than what is holy, but since in this it declares its *denial* of what is holy" (Martensen). The power of sin makes man and mankind not only weak, but corrupt; not only ill, but spiritually dead; not indeed incapable, but unfitted for, and deprived of, life in holy communion with God.

6. This condition, in which man is placed by the corruption of sin, is, from the nature of the case, capable of ever-varying change, and on this account, when a closer description of it is to be given, is constantly divided into various *grades*. As distinguished from some, who speak here of a triple, and from others, who talk of a sevenfold condition, we intend to look somewhat more closely into a fivefold condition.

So we think first of (*a*) the state of *discord*, which follows as a natural consequence of the destruction of the internal harmony, and of the original nature being, though not utterly destroyed, still dominated by the power of sin. For some time this discord may slumber, under the influence of favourable circumstances, but sooner or later there is raised in every man the conflict between reason and conscience on the one side, and lust and desire on the other, which had already called forth the lament of the heathen poet:—

"....video meliora proboque,
Deteriora sequor."

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[16] Ephes. v. 14; compare Luke xv. 24; John v. 25.
[17] Prov. xx. 27; Matt. vi. 22, 23; Acts xvii. 27.
[18] Scholten.
[19] Jer. xiii. 23.

Striking is the picture drawn by St. Paul of this condition in Rom. vii. 14—23, where, in the light of his present state, he looks back on his former pre-christian condition.[20] At one moment the better principle is uppermost, at the next the sinful rules; but, if no higher delivering power intervenes, defeat is inevitable, and—

(*b.*) The condition of *slavery* is soon felt with its heavy burdens. The question as to free or slavish will, which here naturally occurs, would have called forth a less violent strife, if it had not been always viewed too much from the theological, and too little from the psychological side. Where this last is seriously done, the saying of our Lord,[21] which calls the friend of sin its slave, will be easily understood. Freedom in contrast with outward compulsion may be granted to a certain degree, even to the sinner; but in contrast with moral slavery must be once for all denied to him. Even where he can in some degree restrain himself, such avoiding of some sins is quite different from actually doing or being good. To the question whether the sinful will can by a bold resolve at once love God again, and return to His communion, we reply in the words of the confession,[22] "Who can expect any improvement from his own free will, who knows that the carnal mind is enmity against God?" Therefore the Reformed Church rightly opposed the "proud heresy of Pelagius,"[23] deeming it quite inconceivable that where heart, conscience, and intellect have felt the fatal influence of sin, the will alone should have escaped it, as by a miracle. The will does not only follow the intellect, according to the well-known one-sided maxim, "Voluntas sequitur intellectum," but specially the internal impulse of the heart, and in consequence of the sinfulness of the heart, the will, too, ever inclines to evil. Each instantaneous act, besides, is not merely caused by motives, but is at the same time connected with earlier acts, and—as has been truly said—no one is free from his own antecedents. "Ethical Psychology teaches that a single act cannot so isolate itself, as the Pelagian view presupposes; no act is ever done without any connexion whatever" (Nitzsch). This slavery of sin is excellently described to us in Holy Scripture, *e.g.*, in the history of the man who had sold himself to do that which was evil in the sight of the Lord,[24] and is specially testified in different ways by St. Paul, *e.g.*, in Rom. vi. 16, 17; 2 Cor. iii. 17; Phil. 2, 13. The saying of Augustine is most true, "libero arbitrio male utens homo, et se perdidit, et ipsum." Hence, too, we cannot, with the older Remonstrants, assume that there is a certain indifference of the will, and that in consequence it retains almost the same relation to moral good and evil, which the tongue of the balance does to the two scales. Much rather would the experience of every slave of sin, who has really been made free in Christ, prove that he in earlier times was bound to that which he even then deplored sometimes with the bitterest tears, and from which still he could not relieve himself. What a deep truth is hidden in the melancholy complaint, "I can do everything that I will, except willing," and what comfort

[20] Compare *Bib. Theol. N. T.*, Eng. trans., p. 282.
[21] John viii. 34.
[22] *Ned. Gel.*, Art. xiv.
[23] Compare § lxxv. ii. 2
[24] 1 Kings xxi. 1—14.

in the words of Scripture, that besides the doing God also effects the willing. Therefore tones of deep contrition met with in many Christian hymns find an echo in every one who has ceased to be a stranger to his own heart. The power of sin makes the will like the injured spring which cannot possibly raise itself and return to its right direction. "The scholastic Pharisees preach the power of free will; but the Christian will confess that nothing is less in his own power than his own heart."[25] If that painful feeling cannot be banished even from the heart of the Christian, how much deeper is the wound in the heart of the sinner, even where the pain is dulled; and it must be that with every step down the sloping path retrogression becomes more difficult, and advance more inevitable. That which at first was choice, becomes fate, and at length a man cannot turn back, even if he himself would. Or rather, one should indeed still wish, but actually one wills not; and with a fettered inclination of the will he becomes at last quite helpless and void of will under the power of the corrupter.[26]

(*c.*) A state of *false security* is usually the result of the condition just sketched. Scripture represents it under the image of a deep sleep, in which men are steeped, as it were taken in the wiles of the devil;[27] a result partly of the blinding of conscience; partly of the slothfulness of the flesh. Herod Antipas supplies us with an example, who after earlier doubt and slavishness,[28] had now reached such deadness as to be able to mock the Saviour, at the mention of whose name he had not long before trembled.[29] At this standpoint indifference to good itself has begun, but there is not as yet indifference to the appearance of goodness, and thus men fall into—

(*d.*) A condition of *hypocrisy*, of which Caiaphas gives us a specimen.[30] That hypocrisy is a condition lower even than indifference to good, is plain. True, it is an involuntary homage, rendered by vice to virtue, but at the same time an astonishing revelation of the power of sin, as not merely selfishness, but lying, and thus a forsaking of the truth as well as of love. No wonder that the Saviour, always so meek and gentle, making an exception in the case of hypocrites, denounces against them such terrible woes. Where, however, this warning is overlooked, the transition is soon made to—

(*e.*) A state of *hardening*, which makes us involuntarily think of the Egyptian Pharaoh, and which is from time to time and rightly declared in Holy Scripture to be sin and the punishment of sin.[31] The observation, that we read in Holy Scripture just as many times that *God* hardened Pharaoh as that he hardened *himself*, leads to the conclusion that we have here to do with a Divine as well as a human factor, which we must not overlook. The hardening, often having been man's own deed, at

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[25] Melancthon.
[26] Ephes. iv. 19; Rom. i. 24, *sqq.*
[27] Ephes. v. 14; 2 Tim. ii. 26.
[28] Mark vi. 20—28.
[29] Luke xxiii. 8; compare Luke ix. 7—9.
[30] John xi. 50; Matt xxvi. 62, 63; 2 Tim. iii. 5; Tit. i. 16.
[31] [Jer. xxxvi. 24].

last becomes his state, and he who begins by not wishing to believe, ends by being unable to do so. Thus are the words of Isa. vi. 9, 10,[32] fulfilled in God's righteous judgment, and by degrees the transition becomes more easy to that sin, which the Lord describes as the only unpardonable and eternal one, the sin against the Holy Ghost;[33] unpardonable, because in this state repentance and conversion is no longer possible; eternal, because the self-conscious and stubborn hatred of a God, who was once known, cannot but rage without end. Naturally, these conditions can only be theoretically distinguished, since in reality they are ceaselessly running one into another. If the last is only reached by a few, the first is known to every one, and each preceding state may lead the way to the next. Opposed to all these is the state of moral freedom, known as such only by name indeed to the sinner. From the power of evil, which the sinner experiences in such a terrible way, its culpability follows of itself.

Comp. H. RITTER, *Ueber das Böse und seine Folgen* (1869); LUTHARDT, *Die Lehre vom freien Willen und seinen Verhältniss zur Gnade* (1863). Upon the sin against the Holy Ghost, VAN OOSTERZEE, *Leven van Jezus*, ii., pp. 330—335, with the literature there mentioned; to which must be added C. J. RIGGENBACH, *Apolog. Beiträge* (1853), p. 143, *sqq.*; J. MÜLLER, *a. a. O.*, p. 544, *sqq.*; and WEISS' article in Herzog's *R. E.*, xxi.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Can all sins be easily and completely explained by the principle of selfishness?—A closer investigation of the idea and doctrine of deadly sin.—The controversy as to liberum arbitrium in the Lutheran and Reformed Churches.—What view must we take of God's work in the hardening of the heart? (Compare Isaiah vi. 9, 10; Rom. ix. 18.)

SECTION LXXVIII.—ITS CULPABILITY.

With the idea of sin is most closely connected that of guilt, and with the idea of guilt that of punishment. The culpability of sin is founded on the nature of God, the essential being of man, and the kind of mutual relation between God and man, a relation disowned and violated by sin. All sins are culpable, because committed against the high majesty and infinite mercy of God. But all sins are not equally culpable; not one is wholly excusable, one only utterly unpardonable.

[32] Compare Matt. xiii. 14, 15.
[33] Matt. xii. 31, 32; compare Heb. vi. 4—6; 1 John v. 16; 2 Pet. ii. 20—22.

1. Since sin reveals so fatal a power, nothing is more natural than that it should entail the most lamentable consequences for this world and the next. Hamartology must, of course, be completed by the consideration of the punishments of sin in their wide extent. But the question as to these punishments must be preceded by another, as to the right with which sin is punished. The idea of guilt, not incorrectly called "the clearest conviction and the darkest conception about which Theology ever can speak,"[1] must thus be discussed. Here it concerns the proper *meaning*, *ground*, and *extent* of the thesis so often disputed: sin is guilt.

2. And then we must at once duly separate the ideas of *obligation* and *culpability*. We are morally *obliged* or *bound* to love one another, and he who should do everything to which he was called, would only do what he must consider himself bound to do.[2] But now when, being a debtor to this, he withdraws himself from the obligation, he becomes a debtor in a completely different way. That which is wanting in his obedience is in the moral domain his "shortcoming" and debt, and that shortcoming evidently is his *own* guilt (*c'est* ma *faute*), when he must consider himself its cause. If now a man be morally bound to any one, who has the right to exact payment for shortcomings, and—if that exaction cannot be paid—to punish; then, from the idea of guilt springs at once that of culpability. Thus guilt (*culpa*) necessarily includes culpability (*reatus*), *i.e.*, the obligation to suffer punishment (*obligatio ad pœnam*). We distinguish thus in the idea of guilt an objective and a subjective side; the first, the actual condition of the sinner; the other, the sad consciousness of the sin. "Guilt is the conscious arrest of our life under the Divine law, which demands satisfaction" (Nitzsch.)

3. The consciousness of guilt is thus rooted, not only in the fact that one imputes sin to himself, but in the feeling that he *must* impute it to himself, as something which is not only in or about, but from himself, that therefore he is personally guilty,[3] and subject to the punitive judgment of God. Guilt is thus recognised as something objective, something really present, by which the sinner is compelled to pass judgment on himself. The entire teaching of the Old and New Testaments concerning sacrifices and expiations is based upon this important supposition; and we may boldly assert that there still is an infinitely greater amount of guilt, than of *consciousness* of guilt. Whoever asserts, as does Scholten, that sin indeed reveals itself to us as objective guilt upon the legal, but not on the Evangelical standpoint, declares in other words that repentance is self-deceit, and the import of the word of reconciliation in 2 Cor. v. 19, is an empty sound. This is the inevitable fate of Determinism, that in the end it sacrifices conscience to knowledge, and degrades the word Grace into mere nonsense. Higher far stood the non-Christian poet when he sung—

"Life is not the highest good, but the greatest of misfortunes is guilt." (Schiller.)

4. The culpability of sin is founded in *God's* own essence. Even where we avoid as carefully as we can all Anthropomorphism, we feel that what the Scripture tells us of God's anger against sin is the expression of a

[1] Lange. [2] Rom. xiii. 8; compare Luke xvii. 10. [3] Ἔνοχος, James ii. 10.

deeply affecting truth. The idea of a justice which demands punishment, by no means belongs exclusively to the Old Testament, as is so often asserted, but is seen on many a page of the New.[4] A God, indeed, whose attitude towards sin was absolutely apathetic, must be a lifeless unholy God, whom we could just as little honour as love. For the Divine sight there must be a real distinction between the polluted child of Adam, even before his sinful nature is yet seen, and the stainless angel. And when the sin is actual, repeated, unceasing, how *could* He suffer a confusion and rebellion which voluntarily resists and hinders the highest aim of His ove? He must then cease to love Himself as well as His creatures. From the pain felt by love, because it is misconceived, anger is naturally born, whose proper object is really sin; yet must the sinner, too, who makes himself one with the sin, inevitably fear the worst.[5]

5. Not less necessarily does the culpability of sin follow from the nature of *man*, as a rational, moral, and consequently responsible being. The beast, the idiot, the lunatic, is not culpable, even when he does something deserving punishment; but it is not so with the sinner, who still and always remains man, and just on this account begins to excuse himself when he has done something wrong.[6] There is, indeed, such a presentment of moral corruption, according to which man becomes so perverted, that he can no longer be called culpable. Is the beast of prey culpable when with fully developed powers it prepares for the blood-thirsty destruction which its nature enjoins on it? But then it is overlooked that man is brought by sin into an unnatural condition, and that in every man, however sinful, reason and conscience continue to raise their voice anew against those of desire and lust. Though the will be inclined to evil, with respect to individual acts there remains always a certain liberty of will, and the saying of Augustine, "Nec inviti tales sumus," retains its force. Nowhere does Scripture teach that, as the consequence of innate sinfulness, we are driven to every possible crime; everywhere is seen the distinction between our condition as sinners and the slavery to which we voluntarily surrender ourselves. Primarily, man is not the slave of any special sin; but he becomes so by continued indulgence, and in consequence of this he utterly loses his freedom of choice in any particular case. It does not depend upon ourselves whether or not we carry with us a sinful heart, but whether or not we follow its dictates.[7] He who asserts that by nature the sinner cannot do aught but resist God's grace, makes thereby his conversion psychologically impossible, and, to the apparent benefit of Dogmatics, saps the foundation of all morality at one stroke.—Even the affecting figures, which have been brought to light lately by the as yet relatively young science of moral statistics, do not prove, as is so readily asserted, that freedom and responsibility are mere empty sounds. They only confirm what nobody denies, that the law of proportion applies even

[4] See, *e.g.*, Luke iii. 17, 18; Matt. xi. 20—24; chapters xxiii., xxiv., xxv.; and in the Epistles, Rom. ii. 6—10; 2 Thess. i. 8, 9; compare Heb. xii. 29, and the whole of the Apocalypse.

[5] Compare § xlix. 7.

[6] Compare Gen. iii. 7, *sqq.*

[7] Deut. v. 29.

to the development of the power of evil under certain conditions, and that the whole of society is in a condition of sin and guilt, to which each one contributes his share, and for which all are thus, in a much greater degree than is often suspected, answerable one for another. But the sinner who, *e.g.*, is brought to theft, always suffers himself thus to be led; and even the act, which is the result of definite motives and conditions, the sinner's conscience will still, and rightly, impute to him as his *own*. If we do not wish utterly to ignore the rights of conscience, we must continue to maintain not only the imputation, but the real imputability of moral evil against every one who forgets the distinction between unvarying causality in nature and relative freedom in moral life. Sin and punishment are linked as it were to one another by God Himself, and "the figures of statistics in their regularity are only rays, from which the fact of that secret, world-ruling will of God shines out with its conformity to law" (Luthardt).

6. By the peculiar *relation* between God and man, the law of which we speak is raised above all contradiction. If no one can punish but He who is Lord and lawgiver, God is this in every sense of the word.[8] If no one can be punished save he who is bound to obedience, and who is placed in a fit condition to obey, certainly neither of these points can be disputed with regard to man.[9] Thus far it is an honour to be capable of punishment; we should not be so if we were not under, and even in a certain sense on an equal footing with God, as person against person, as subjects, at least, towards their lawful King. If, however, without any lawful reason, this relation be broken on our side, then must one of two things happen, either it is something accidental and indifferent, which surely none will assert, or, if it be in truth something sacred, then may it not be profaned without punishment.

7. Already we begin to see better the *extent* and degree of our culpability through sin. All sin is culpable, as committed against the high Majesty of God. If now in daily life an outrage is of greater importance in proportion as it is committed against a person of higher state, in this case we may with the fullest right speak of injured Majesty. That it is, in addition, committed against the highest Love, adds to it the character of the vilest ingratitude, and we cannot be surprised that a tender conscience accuses us even with regard to a relatively trifling failure; it is one proof more, that it not merely could have been, but also should have been avoided. Yet all sins are not equally culpable; principles and intentions, as well as circumstances of different kinds, contribute the deciding weight in determining the guilt of a misdeed.[10] Since no one sins entirely unconsciously, every transgression brings with it a minimum of culpability, and for this reason needs forgiveness, which can also be obtained in a defined way. One only is here excepted; this one, which we have before shortly mentioned,[11] the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, with respect to which we can here only repeat, that it *from its nature* is unpardonable. Human corruption may rise to the uttermost degree of obduracy, as water, becoming colder and colder, can freeze into solid ice, yet remains

[8] James iv. 12.
[9] Micah vi. 8.
[10] Compare § lxxvii. 2.
[11] Section lxxvii. 5.

in its substance always water, and can again melt and become fluid through the warm rays of the sun. But a stone will never melt under the sun's rays; and this is now the very peculiarity of the sin against the Holy Ghost, that it cannot, like every other sin, make a man become ice, but as it were transforms him internally into a stone. The question which in earlier times separated the Lutheran and Reformed Dogmatics, whether this sin could be committed by one really regenerate, can in our view be answered only in the negative. Still the warning against this degree of guilt and culpability is not wholly unnecessary to any one.

Comp. LACTANTIUS, *De irâ Dei;* BARTHOLOMESS, *Vom Zorn Gottes*, in the *Jahrb. für deutsche Theol.* (1861), p. 258, *sqq.;* F. WEBER, *Vom Zorn Gottes, ein Bibl. Theol. Versuch* (1862); LANGE'S articles *Schuld* and *Schuldbewustsein*, in Herzog's *R. E.*, xiv.; J. CRAMER, *Het berouw en het ethisch determinisme* (1868). As to moral statistics and their connection with Ethics, LUTHARDT, *Apol. Vorträge*, ii. (1867), p. 210, *sqq.;* and R. GRAU, on Buckle's History of Civilisation, in the new *Biblioth. voor Chr. Theol. en Letterk.* (1870), i.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Is it possible from the Naturalistic standpoint to maintain the idea of guilt?—The importance of moral statistics in our investigation.—Connection of the recognition of the reality of the idea of guilt with the chief contents of the Gospel.—The significance of excuses.—How must we judge of the sin against the Holy Spirit, and how best treat this doctrine for the Church?

SECTION LXXIX.—ITS SENTENCE.

According to God's righteous judgment, there is a direct and reciprocal connexion between sin and misery. In all which the sinner lacks, feels, and must needs expect, he already here on earth experiences a part of his well-deserved retribution. The judgment of God on sin is manifest in the history of the whole of mankind, and is proclaimed by the condition of groaning humanity. Its complete fulfilment, however, is only attained on the other side of the grave, where obdurate sin is requited with eternal misery.

1. Guilt and punishment are such completely correlative ideas, that the consideration of the culpability of sin leads at once to that of its judgment. However sad, that consideration is necessary to enable us better to estimate the depth of the fall, as well as the value of the redemption. This investigation naturally attaches itself to what we have already before taught concerning the righteousness of God.[1]

[1] Section xlix.

2. When we speak of the punishment of sin, we mean thereby in general, the evil of suffering conjoined to the transgression, by which the transgressor must according to right pay for his misdeed. The essence of punishment is therefore calamity, whether it spring of itself from the misdeed, or be expressly attached to it by the will of the Judge. Its aim is not in the first place amendment, however desirable this may be as a consequence, but restraint of the sinner by maintaining the rights of the law. Its extent renders necessary a division into temporal and eternal or future punishments, while the first must also be divided into natural and positive punishments, which are sometimes with less accuracy styled arbitrary. There is no overweighing objection even to this last distinction, when once we have recognised, from the Christian Theistic standpoint, that God has the right as well as the power of visiting the transgression, if He wills, with such experience as would not otherwise necessarily flow from it, according to the purely natural course of things. Natural punishment may also be called positive in so far as it is God Himself who has once for all willed that it should follow the committed sin, as the shadow the light.

3. The connexion between sin and misery is universally felt, and not seriously disputed by any one. "If there were no sins, there would be no wounds." This connexion is *direct*, since sin separates us from Him, in whom alone is our happiness, and on this account cannot but make us most miserable; *reciprocal*, because as misery springs from sin, so again does new sin spring continually from misery. Sin is the seed, misery the harvest, but this constantly brings with it new grains of seed; indeed, sin not merely *produces*, but itself *is*, the greatest misery. Every other sorrow is partly caused, partly increased, partly at length still more infinitely exceeded in wretchedness by it. Not only the suffering which comes direct from God, but the pain which men inflict on one another, even the calamity which we make for ourselves, must be regarded as its bitter fruit. The consciousness of sin increases on the one hand each load of life, and diminishes on the other the power to bear these with calmness. Just because sin is a much more general, shameful, and pernicious evil than any other plague,[2] ought it to be called the greatest cause of complaint.

4. We see already that the entire idea of punishment must not in any way be considered as something purely subjective, but much more as the expression of a touching reality. But we also see that there is a real distinction between punishment and chastisement, as the words of the Apostle in 1 Cor. xi. 32, also tell us. The world is condemned, the Christian chastised, for the same reason that the rebel is sentenced, while the disobedient child is corrected. If to our feeling the distinction is great, it by no means follows that it merely exists in our feeling. Why could not God, too, on His part impose the same sorrow on one as a righteous judgment, and on another as a beneficent method of education and purification? It is inaccurate and arbitrary to assert, that punishment does not consist in any external tribulation, but in the deadly power of sin itself;[3] the one does not exclude the other.—In general, we may say of all punishments of sin, that they are strictly just, surely guaranteed in the case of continued

[2] Lam. iii. 39.

[3] Scholten.

obduracy, and both in themselves, and combined one with another, are terrible for the sinner.[4]

5. On this side of the grave the sinner experiences his merited punishment, partly in what he loses (pœna *damni*), partly in what he actually suffers (pœna *sensûs*). Even the rest, which he *foregoes*, is a sign that he is separated from God, and the early or late awakened conscience is a judgment of God.[5] The relation of the conscience to evil when committed is threefold: it reminds us accurately of the misdeed, it judges it righteously, and it punishes it severely.[6] Thus there arises a fearful dread of God[7] quite distinct from childish awe, which compels the transgressor of his own accord to withdraw from God, and so makes him sink still deeper into sin.—But he also soon discovers a new punishment in that which *sullies* him; since God requites sin with sin, and not seldom leaves the sinner to his perverted inclination.[8] Naturally, He does not will sin as such, but the revelation of its internal power, in order that it may be judged by its own consequences. We can see how one sin becomes the parent of another, from the narrative in 2 Sam. xi., xii., as well as from the account of Jeroboam's misdeeds in 1 Kings xv. 29, 30.

6. To this is added that which the sinner suffers by what he *experiences*, partly from the *natural* consequences, partly from the properly so-called *positive* punishments of sin. Sensuality produces disease, and pride leads to fall. "Per quod quis peccat, per idem punitur et idem." In many a special instance we cannot deny a special judgment of God, by which the words of Judges i. 7 are constantly justified afresh. The history of Jacob, Haman, Pilate, and others in the sacred narrative, as well as that of many others in profane history, speaks here plainly enough. Take for example, among others, unexpected visitations, such as overtook Ananias and Sapphira, or Elymas the Sorcerer.[9] In the history of the world, and of nations also, we meet with calamities, which can hardly be considered as anything but such positive judgments; as the flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha, of Pharaoh and his army, Jerusalem and the temple, and of others even in our own time. Why should it be denied or complained of as a hardship that God with deep wisdom thus directly shows His holy repugnance against sin? or why, since indeed, in contrast with these punishments, are also placed special rewards for proved obedience? It was more than superstition when the heathen recognised the hand of God in special calamities, which had no natural connexion with the crime. We must only take care that we never conclude the greater sinfulness of those who have met with special calamities.[10] But of ourselves a faithful conscience will declare whether any sorrow must be regarded as a special retribution or not.

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[4] Heb. xii. 29.
[5] Compare Prov. xxviii. 1; Isa. lvii. 21; the instances of Adam, Cain, Saul, Herod, Judas, etc.
[6] See Gen. xlii. 21, 22; Matt. xiv. 2; and numerous other passages.
[7] Rom. viii. 15.
[8] Rom. i. 28.
[9] Acts v. xiii.
[10] Job xlii. 8; Luke xiii. 4, 5; John ix. 3.

A thoughtful observer will often discover a startling connexion between fate and life, disappointment and transgression.

7. What finally *awaits* the sinner even here on earth, raises his misery to its height. Even *before* death he has ever less to hope and worse to dread, according as it becomes darker within him and around him. In accordance with the deep words of Heb. ii. 15, he is subject to the fear of death, which is partly the fruit, but partly too the cause, of the most fatal slavery. But specially *in* death does he receive a retribution of sin, which cannot be thought of without dread. We have said in § lxx. 6, that corporeal death is not a consequence of the original constitution of our nature, but of its deteriorated state, and besides, is infinitely aggravated for the sinner. "Peccatum iram Dei provocavit, ira Dei mortem induxit" (Gerhardt). If the "once to die" is already a terrifying prospect, the dread becomes more menacing, since death not only separates us from life, and all which was dear to us in life, but delivers us over to an omniscient Judge. And *after* death—but for the moment enough has been already said to make us regard the truth of the words of the prophet in Jer. ii. 19, as absolutely universal.

8. The judgment, already to be dreaded here by every sinner, is revealed to a much wider extent in the history of *mankind.* What is that history, but a drama, whose tragic character is increased by the very influence of sin, and of which a satisfactory *denouement* seems absolutely impossible without the intervention of grace? Oppression and rebellion, wars and rumours of wars, craft and violence, what a sad concatenation! Who, for example, can number the sins of diplomacy, and all the miseries which have sprung from them? What an astonishing revelation of the power, but at the same time of the judgment, of sin in slavery, in art and science, even in the domain of language! And in that maelstrom, not only the guilty, but the wholly or partially innocent are swept away,[11] and sick unto death, the fallen world is still again and again chastising itself. All the unjustly shed blood comes at last upon the head of a generation which has slain the prophets;[12] and the nineteenth century reaps the fatal harvest of the seeds of unbelief and revolution which the eighteenth has sown. Thus the world itself is the great Flagellant, which ceases not to scourge its bleeding limbs as a punishment for its sins. Hints alone are here possible, but still are sufficient to show with what terrible seriousness God deals with an injustice with which man often so irresponsibly sports. The words of the apostle, Rom. i. 18, might thus serve as a motto for the annals of the world's history. Every page gives proof of living under the longsuffering, but not in the full enjoyment of the goodness, of God.

9. We cannot deny the traces of God's judgment upon sin, shown even in the face of nature.[13] Although we dare not assert with some philosophers that an actual dæmoniac power makes its destructive influence felt on the life of nature, yet can we still less overlook the fact, that in the song of praise in Creation, perhaps no tone is so distinctly heard as that of elegy. Most truly, "wherever the stars shine, does a universal sorrow pervade all the veins of nature" (Fr. v. Schlegel). It is the voice of the groaning

[11] 2 Sam. xxiv. 17. [12] Matt. xxiii. 35—37. [13] Section lxxv. i. 4.

creation,[14] that is, of all animate and inanimate nature, as distinguished from the Christian, but even he himself is not free from this suffering. The whole creation shares involuntarily in the consequences of the fall, and, as in a chaotic state, looks forward with eager desire to freedom and transformation. A thoughtful Dogmatics will not venture to describe the extent of this punishment; "these are things which have occurred in a condition quite different to ours, and which surpass our present capacity" (Pascal). But the fact of Creation's bondage itself presses as by force upon every one who has considered the face of nature with a more than superficial glance, and, however mysterious, is infinitely more reasonable than its absolute rejection. (Cf. Luther on Gen. iii. 17.)

10. If thus the consequences of sin on this side the grave are already so terrible, yet can it not but be expected, when we believe in the righteousness of God and the eternal destiny of man, that they also extend to the other side, and there exhibit a still more fearful character. If the Old Testament leaves many questions on this subject unanswered, it is quite different with the writings of the New, which speak as plainly as often of a *future* retribution. The most fearful punishments are threatened by the Lord and His witnesses on all who continue in unbelief, and unrepentant;[15] and specially on those who by their utter want of love gave proof of their ineradicable selfishness.[16] Much more difficult is it to say anything positive concerning the proper nature of these punishments, because they are alluded to under very different images, which cannot however be regarded as figurative representations merely. The most adequate conception may perhaps be drawn from the well-known parable in Luke xvi. 19—31. Even here we see, on the one side, a *want* of that which was most valued and enjoyed during the life on earth; on the other, a *feeling* of dreadful pain, increased by the certainty of the happiness enjoyed by others, and the self-reproaches of the now awakened conscience. This remorse must naturally end in despair when all prospect of restoration is definitely cut off, and with the feeling of one's own guilt is joined that of a never-ending "too late." In this loss of the past, this remorse for the present, this despair for the future, is revealed the wrath of God, which abides on the obdurate.

11. So much thus appears, that the *nature* of the future punishment is in many respects different from that of temporal punishment. The latter was partly delayed by the longsuffering, partly lessened by the mercy, of God, partly concealed from the eyes of others, partly confined within a certain space of time; in the future retribution the opposite of all this will be the case. It is the revelation of God's holy wrath, no longer tempered by His saving grace. And as we think of the place where this wretchedness dwells, of the circle within which the condemned are placed together, of the revelation of all secrets, which is joined with the most adequate retribution—above all, of the infinite duration of the still future

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[14] Rom. viii. 19—23.
[15] John iii. 36; Matt. xiii. 41, 42; 2 Thess. i. 8, 9; Rev. xxi. 8.
[16] Matt. xxv. 41—46.

punishment, it then becomes impossible for us to sound the ocean of misery caused by sin.

12. The *duration* of future punishment is most definitely represented in Holy Scripture as absolutely endless.[17] Even if the word "eternal" does not itself denote absolute endlessness, it is surely a different matter when eternal pain is without any limitation contrasted with eternal life.[18] We shall first discuss in chapter vii., in connexion with Eschatology, the doctrine of the so-called restitution of all things, in its entirety, but here we will only call to mind that its supporters can appeal but to single, indirect, and mysterious utterances of prophecy: those on the other hand who maintain the contrary opinion can bring forward numerous and plain statements of the Lord and His witnesses; at any rate, the possibility of an endless misery is most distinctly declared in Matt. xii. 31, 32; and words such as those in Luke xvi. 26; Matt. xxvi. 24; xxv. 10, 41, could hardly be vindicated from the charge of exaggeration, if He who spake then had Himself even seen a ray of light in the outer darkness, and been able and willing to kindle it before others' eyes. In no case could such a ray be seen without previous sorrow and conversion; but, viewed psychologically, this latter is certainly nowhere less to be looked for than in a hell of sorrow and despair, not to say that the Gospel nowhere opens up to us a certain prospect of the continuance of the gracious work of God on the other side of the grave. He who here talks of harshness must by no means forget that sinful man is a very partial judge in his own case; that nothing less than the highest grace is boldly and stubbornly set at nought in the case here supposed; and that there will be always, according to the teaching of Scripture, an equitable distinction in the rewards as well as in the punishments of the future.[19] Aye, even if men might flatter themselves with a diminution or postponement of the punishment, there would still always be a remembrance of the countless mischief which they had done to themselves and others, which as a dark cloud would be before the sun of an eventual happiness. Least of all must they hope for such an end, who have known the great salvation, and all their life long ungratefully despised it.[20]—As to the Heathen and others who entirely without their own fault have missed the way of life, Holy Scripture nowhere compels us to believe that these should at once, on that account alone, be the victims of an eternal damnation. "We must carefully distinguish between damnability and damnation; damnability is indeed the germ, but *still only* the germ, of damnation" (Lange). According to the teaching of the Apostle (Rom ii. 12, *sqq.*), the heathen will be judged by a different rule from the Jew, just as the professor of the Gospel will certainly be differently judged from these two. While there is only one way of salvation,[21] rather will the Merciful make it known to men without Christ even after death,[22] than the Just One will reap where He has not sown. The kindly utterances of Zwingle on this point are certainly more in accord with the spirit of the Gospel,[23] than the hard sentence to which a

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[17] Mark iv. 44—50; Rev. xiv. 11, etc.
[18] Matt. xxv. 46.
[19] Luke xii. 47, 48.
[20] Matt. xi. 24; Heb. ii. 3.
[21] Acts iv. 12.
[22] 1 Pet. iii. 19.
[23] See his *Fidei Christi Expositio*, Op. iv. 65.

dogmatic Exclusivism has not seldom led others. We can safely leave to God the justification, even in this respect, of His own government of the world; but we must take careful heed, that we do not try to be more merciful and wise than He, to whom sin, as long as it continues sin, is thoroughly damnable. Even in preaching the Gospel, His servants are not free to leave this darker side entirely unmentioned. The statement of it should only be joined always with that of the friendly light of grace, and let the preacher take care that he does not lead his hearers in the way of despairing fear or unbelieving doubt, by yielding to the desire to paint hell as black as possible. The best statement of the prospect of the sinner is that of "the going to his own place," *i.e.*, to the land of his own choice, where he may still continue to dwell.

Compare the Art. *Höllenstrafen*, in Herzog's *R. E.* vi., p. 181, *sqq.*; also O. KRABBE, *Die Lehre von der Sünde und vom Tode* (1836); and MAU, *Vom Tode, dem Solde der Sünde* (1841); the Essay of LANGE on Pelagianism, in his *Vermischte Schriften*, i. (1840), pp. 217—307, and ii. p. 258; the suggestive account, *Die Reise nach dem Lande seiner Wahl*; also HEIBERG'S Poem, *A Soul after Death* (1865); A. MONOD, *Sermons*, i. (1856), pp. 366—376. Upon the influence of sin on the inanimate creation, see the beautiful language of the physicist ROEPER, quoted by LUTHARDT, *a. a. O.*, ii., p. 201, *sqq.*

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Further elucidation of the ideas of punishment, the right of punishment, etc., in their theological meaning.—Can the doctrine of a righteousness which demands punishment be co-ordinated with the subject-matter of the Gospel?—Are all calamities punishments?—Death in connexion with sin.—The expectation of a future retribution, even in the worlds of Heathenism and Judaism.—The doctrine of the Church, specially that of the Reformed, compared with that of the New Testament, on this point.—Import and force of the 11th answer of the Heidelberg Catechism.—What view must we take of the future lot of the heathen world?—The dangers to be avoided when discussing the doctrine of punishment for sin before the Church.

SECTION LXXX.—THE POSSIBILITY OF SALVATION.

Mankind, according to God's righteous judgment, bowed down under the guilt and punishment of sin, is utterly unable to set itself free from this curse. Yet there remains the possibility of salvation, since the sinner is still man, and as such capable of salvation. This possibility, however, could never have been realised without a special intervention of God, in which the sinner needs to believe, but for which he had no right to hope.

1. Where we see the individual and the race either gone down to, or on the way to, so dark an abyss, the question as to the possibility of deliverance is as natural at the end of this division, as that concerning the possibility of

the fall was at the close of the preceding one.[1] It can be the less put off, in proportion as it is more clearly seen that the confession of the moral inability of the sinner,[2] though often misunderstood and misused, is the expression of a sad reality. Under the influence of sin man becomes a slave, absolutely unable to regain liberty by himself, and the slave will become the victim. The consequences of sin cleave to us, and unite themselves to our inner life, like Dejanira's tunic sent to Hercules. Even if we could (and this is psychologically inconceivable) from this time forth, by an irrevocable resolve, put an end to all our transgressing, the past will nevertheless still remain to be accounted for. The evil conscience is constantly bringing us into a state of restlessness and fear, and—moral goodness can come only from the principle of love. The guilty sinner, alienated from God, cannot possibly kindle the flame of love in himself; others, equally subject to the power of sin, can just as little avert its curse from us. No finite creature, however excellent, can turn away from us the inevitable consequences of God's holy anger. Thus the sinful man, left to himself, is not only probably, but certainly lost; and the ransom of the captive soul is not to be found on earth. (Cf. Ps. xlix. 6—9; Matt. xvi. 26.)

2. Still, notwithstanding all, the question as to the possibility of salvation must be answered affirmatively, and that not merely from a view of God's Power and Grace, but also from a view of man, who stands as it were behind the sinner, and in him is indeed overruled, but by no means destroyed by the sinful principle. We must carefully avoid the two extremes of Pelagianism on one side, and Manichæism on the other. We have already discussed the former; we see the other represented at the time of the Reformation by Matthias Flacius Illyricus († 1675), who asserted that original sin was "de essentiâ hominis;" a statement which still lives in a popular form among many, who conceive of "death by sin" as literally as possible, and are at once grieved when they hear that man has not ceased to be "God's offspring." This onesidedness, not unjustly called "Manichæismus crustatus" by the pronounced Reformed Theologian, Heidegger (1698), is in direct conflict with the utterances of Biblical Theology, as well as with those of the human consciousness, and in its consequences would at last transfer the whole doctrine of sin from the domain of Ethics to that of Physics. In opposition to this we must with all earnestness assert that the possibility of salvation still exists, not merely metaphysically, in the sense of Luke iii. 8, but also psychologically, since even in fallen man there still remain the "slight traces" of which article xiv. of the Netherlands Confession speaks. "Homo, dum nascitur, quia bonum aliquid est, in quantum homo est, Manichæum redarguit, laudatque Creatorem; in quantum vero trahit originale peccatum, Pelagium redarguit et habet necessarium Salvatorem. Nam et quod *sananda* dicitur ista *natura*, utrumque repercutit; quia nec medicina opus haberet, si sana esset, nec sanari possit omnino, si æternum atque immutabile malum esset" (Augustine).

3. The *ground* of the ever-remaining possibility of deliverance is thus

[1] Section lxxi. [2] H. C., Ans. viii.

based in the essence of man, who undoubtedly needs a complete Palingenesis, but nevertheless does not require a transubstantiation. The very discord in every sinful heart,[3] on the one hand our calamity, is on the other our happiness; it shows, indeed, that sin is our second, but not yet our proper nature; our malady indeed, but not yet our attribute or element. "Ipse dolor testimonium est boni ademti et boni relicti; nisi enim bonum relictum esset, bonum amissum dolere non posset" (Augustine). This is the distinction between man and the devil; in whom, as far as we can judge from Holy Scripture, this point of connexion is utterly wanting. When the devil lies, he speaks agreeably to his nature;[4] when man tells a lie, he as it were does despite to another, better, but fettered man. Between the vehement inclinations of man and the deepest needs of the sinner a dark abyss gapes; in the sinful man is hidden the groaning creature. The conscience still remains the organ to which a redeeming activity of God can ally itself. Man has the capacity, not to restore himself by the indwelling healthy essence of his nature, but to be restored by the delivering power of grace. He becomes neither beast nor devil; his heart is a field full of weeds, but still something different from stone; he is unable to deliver himself, but still always capable of deliverance. This, it is plain, does not give the sinner the slightest right to hope for deliverance; but also, without this, deliverance would be as impossible as from the Pelagian standpoint it is unnecessary.

4. This possibility, however, can only be realised by a special intervention of God's delivering love. The history of the Jewish and Heathen worlds teaches that this want has in all ages been felt, and most strikingly expressed. Whether and how far it is fulfilled on its side, remains a question, which only a fresh revelation can answer; and this may indeed be discussed, but never determined, in the domain of Anthropology and Hamartology. From this last we can only part with the distinct consciousness, that he who disowns his need of deliverance, remains as much a stranger to the microcosm within him, as he is to the macrocosm around him.

Comp. PASCAL, *Pensées;* F. FABRI, *Het algemeen Waarheidsgevoel* (1863). On Matthias Flacius Illyricus, Herzog, *R. E.*, iv.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

The contest between M. F. Illyricus and Victorinus Strigel in 1560.—Is the possibility of deliverance present in a like degree in every sinner?—Is it really taught everywhere in the Gospel, even from its anthropological side?—Can this confession be completely allied with the fact of the sinner's moral inability?—Why is it of importance to mention it? and against what extremes must we be on our guard?—The opinion to be formed on the contents and form of the reasoning in the Heidelberg Catechism, Ans. xii.—xviii.—Result of the whole Anthropology and Hamartology (Rom. vii. 21—25).

[3] Section lxxvii. 5.

[4] ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων, John viii. 44.

CHAPTER III.

JESUS CHRIST, THE FOUNDER OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

(CHRISTOLOGY.)

SECTION LXXXI.—TRANSITION AND SURVEY.

THE possibility of deliverance has been realised by the revelation of God's truth and grace in Jesus Christ, which forms the great subject of the Gospel of salvation. The work of redemption in Him is alike the crowning and the final aim of the works of creation and providence; a saving act of God, only to be explained from the riches of His infinite love for sinners. The consideration of that work (Soteriology) must necessarily be preceded by that of the person of the Deliverer (Christology), while in this latter we must pay separate attention to the Decree of Salvation, and to the Personality of the Saviour Himself.

1. The present chapter opens an entirely new field of investigation, which extends to the utmost limits of the domain of Christian doctrine. After the separate treatise on Theology and Anthropology, everything which still remains for discussion might be properly collected under the one name of Theanthropology. Indeed, we must now discuss the manner in which the relation between God and man, broken by sin, is restored by God in Christ, and will be still further restored. But the great wealth of our materials renders necessary a division, such as has been already pointed out, in the present chapter, and will be also desirable in the succeeding one. A few introductory remarks are intended to point out here the exact standpoint of our examination.

2. The doctrine concerning a way of salvation is not a peculiar element of Christian dogma only. In any religious system, if it be somewhat developed, the question will arise, what must man do to restore the communion with his God, which has been destroyed? Hence we find in the religions of Heathendom sacrifices, penalties, pilgrimages; and in

Israel, next to the law, Prophecy. That the most insufficient, pitiful, and sinful means have been devised for satisfying this impulse of conscience does not prove anything against the justice and moral earnestness of this attempt. It is universally recognised that a system of doctrine for sinful men must possess, along with a Theology and an Anthropology, a Soteriology as well.

3. Nowhere, however, does this doctrine stand so prominently forward as in the Christian domain. As in Islamism the unity of God is the central dogma, and in Mosaism the Theocracy, so in Christianity is the way of salvation. We naturally use the word salvation here in its widest sense, and think of it as the setting free from the power of sin and its sad consequences. While we here call this our main point, we naturally do not deny that the word of revelation has cast an inestimable light over God, as well as over man. We only assert that the proper centre of the Doctrine of Salvation is not there but here, and that the essentials of the Gospel are best collected in the proposition, *the possibility of salvation, whose necessity is raised beyond all doubt, has been made a reality, not by the intervention of man, but by a proper act of love on the part of God*. That Gospel (good news) deserves its name, not only or principally because it has shed a clearer light on God, virtue, or immortality, than that in which men had thus far rejoiced. Even where all this is recognised, the question as to the proper nature of that really new, heart-rejoicing, and world-renewing fact, which has been revealed, and which justifies eulogies like those in Rom. i. 16, Eph. i. 3, still remains. It can only be answered by placing in the forefront, that here salvation (*σωτηρία*) is presented as attainable by him who was lost by sin, by a way which no sinner could ever have himself opened up.[1] Redemption is not one out of many doctrines, it is the doctrine *par excellence*, the central sun from which everything else in the Gospel must receive its light. Without this one doctrine all the Gospel narrative seems inexplicable, its demands exaggerated, its promises baseless and aimless. The aim of the Gospel and its proclamation is not merely or specially to lead man to a purer knowledge of God, and to perfect virtue, but before all to restore the sinner to his normal relation to God. "Christianity is not great and unique, because it is a more developed and confirmed conscience, but because, without in the least injuring that conscientiousness, but much rather giving it the keenest edge, it yet at once stills the conscience; because it casts out fear by perfect love; because it shows us that God is greater than our hearts. In its inmost nature Christianity is not like the moral law, a 'Thou shalt,' but a satisfaction, a 'Yea and Amen;' it is not a demand in the name of God, but a Divine power and grace, which, seated in the heart, entirely of its own accord, and without command, becomes an instinct of the freest morality" (Ullmann).

4. If, however, the doctrine of Redemption is to be properly understood and valued, it must not be separated from that of Creation and Providence, but must be most closely combined with them. Redemption indeed appears as something new, by which God restores the disturbed moral order,[2] but the new is not yet on that account something which, in entire isolation, stands

[1] Comp. Luke xix. 10; Acts iv. 12; 1 Tim. i. 15.

[2] Isa. lxv. 17.

beyond all historical connexion. The crown of all God's works is united with, and continues to be most closely joined with, those other works. Redemption is at once a new creation and ultimate aim of the providence of God; but one and the same God is revealed here and there, though in different ways. Mysteries and wonders in the domain of Redemption can therefore the less surprise us, because we meet with these in the domains of Creation and Providence. We must not be offended if we discover here even greater mysteries than we have found elsewhere, because the moral and spiritual domain in life is higher than the material: renewing of creation is more than creation itself. And yet the work of Redemption can only be understood and estimated in its intimate connexion with that of Creation and Providence, because Redemption is brought to pass by Him who is the Mediate Cause of Creation and the centre of the entire Divine plan of the world.[3] The harmony, too, which we discover between the kingdom of nature and that of grace, serves not a little to strengthen our belief in the divinity of revelation.

5. However closely allied with the work of creation and the government of all things, Redemption must always be regarded as a free gift of love from God, which can as little be explained naturally *à priori*, as it can be perfectly fathomed *à posteriori*. The attempt, in itself worthy of praise, to justify as reasonable, that which is actual, has not seldom tempted able spirits to try and represent the plan of redemption not only as something most worthy of God, but even as something very natural and intrinsically necessary. A little thought, however, soon shows that Redemption, as the Gospel depicts it, can as little be deduced *à priori* with logical accuracy from the nature of God as from that of man. True, the nature of God is love, but though that love makes redemption explicable, it is and continues, this notwithstanding, an act of free grace. True, man has retained a capacity for redemption, but the sinner has not on that account the slightest right to expect it, as something self-evident.

The fact of redemption in Christ cannot be deduced either from the nature of God, or from the idea of man, or from the historic development of our race, as something absolutely necessary, without thereby undermining the deepest foundation of our Christian faith. This faith, indeed, as it is accepted as presented by the Gospel in the inmost consciousness, does not confess that God in Christ has done what could *à priori* be counted upon with good reason; but, on the contrary, that here has been revealed and taken place, that which no one could have expected or claimed;[4] not that mankind has at length, by its inherent force, after centuries of effort produced "its greatest Son," but that a new branch has been grafted on the old and sickly stem, from which an entirely new life has gone forth.[5] Salvation in Christ is here universally described as the fruit of a pity, without compulsion; which necessarily confounds us, because it so far exceeds all our imagination. Hence, also, the constant mention of a Divine good-pleasure,[6] first brought to light in the fulness of time, whereby certainly nothing is denoted, which could have been reckoned upon reasonably in

[3] Compare §§ lv., lvi. 5.
[4] 1 Cor. ii. 9.
[5] Rom. v. 12—21.
[6] Eph. i. 9; Col. i. 19.

any other way.—Hence it follows, that we must here dispute the right of human wisdom to come to some conclusions *à priori* on its own authority, nay, even that the rights of reason are even more limited in the domain of Soteriology, than in that of Theology or Anthropology. To the questions, What is God, and what is man? individual reflection, even without the light of revelation, can get much nearer to an answer, than if the question be proposed, What has God done for the deliverance of a sinful world? Here neither speculative thought nor empirical investigation can of itself bring us much further. God alone can procure salvation, but He alone, too, can make known to the sinner whether He gives it, and if so, how He will do it. Thus we are here first of all referred to the narrative which tells of the plan of salvation, and upon this all philosophic thought about historic revelation must be founded. Placing ourselves at this standpoint, we speak entirely in the spirit of the Lord, who, in distinction from the work of regeneration upon earth, expressly announces the plan of salvation of God as among the heavenly things.[7] But on this very account we must not be surprised that, even *à posteriori*, the searching to its depth of the revelation in Christ falls too short, even after constant reflection. If redemption is really a Divine work, it must, as such, have its mystery; if it is the greatest of all God's works, we know that the highest mountains cast the longest shadows. The Gospel itself prepares us for this mysteriousness,[8] and its best professors have in all times found in this a matter, not of complaint, but of sublime adoration.

6. The investigation into the doctrine of Redemption is of vital importance for man, for the sinner, for the Christian, for the Theologian and the preacher of the Gospel, especially at the present time. The great matter, which here specially touches us, is not the religion of Jesus, but the salvation in Christ. It is therefore of great importance, not merely to arrange and direct its discussion in a suitable manner—as has already been pointed out in this section—but to begin and continue it in that spirit of deep reverence and faith, which longs for salvation, in which a Paul has preceded us.[9]

Comp. M. VAN STAVEREN, *Diss. de Evang. naturâ.* (1839); L. SCHOEBERLEIN, *Die Grundlehren des Heils, entwickelt aus dem Princip der Liebe* (1848), and the article *Erlösung*, by the same writer, in Herzog, *R. E.* iv.; C. ULLMANN, *Das Wesen des Christenth.* (4th ed., 1854); J. I. DOEDES, *Wat zult gij prediken?* Acad. addr. (1866).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Connexion between this and the preceding chapter.—What do we understand by Redemption? and how has this idea been developed in the Christian Church in the course of centuries?—Christianity the religion of Redemption, and as such the highest religion.—What is the peculiar nature of the Gospel? and who therefore can be said, and who cannot be said, to preach the Gospel?—Elucidation of Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. ii. 9, and similar passages.—Is it possible here to separate entirely from one another the investigation into the person and the work of the Redeemer?—Why must the doctrine of the decree of Redemption be discussed just at this place?

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[7] John iii. 12. [8] Rom. xi. 33; compare Isa. lv. 8, 9. [9] Eph. iii. 14—21.

FIRST DIVISION.

THE DECREE OF REDEMPTION.

SECTION LXXXII.—THE PLAN OF SALVATION IN ITSELF.

THE redemption of the sinful world is the consequence of a Divine plan of salvation (*Decretum Salutis*), which, planned before the foundation of the world, is accomplished in the course of the ages, and has Christ as its centre. That plan of salvation aims at nothing less than the eternal salvation of all who tread the path of life ordained by God, but also of these alone; and that, not on account of their merits or worthiness, but only of God's free grace in Christ, upon which the sinner is absolutely dependent in the work of his salvation. With perfect right, therefore, faith confesses the consoling doctrine of a personal choosing to life (*Prædestinatio ad Salutem*), but at the same time the science of faith confesses its inability thoroughly to fathom this depth, and therefore seeks, above all, to comprehend the decree of salvation, in the light shed upon this revealed mystery by history and experience.

1. Where we have, first of all, to seek an adequate apprehension of the *idea* of the Divine plan of salvation, we must begin by looking back to see what we have already learnt in general in § lv. as to the Divine plan of the world. As this latter refers to the Creation as a whole, so does the former definitely belong to the Redemption of the sinful world. The plan of salvation becomes thus the means of accomplishing the plan of the world, which was disturbed by sin, as again that plan of salvation is carried out by means of a free and gracious election. Hence all Anthropomorphism must now be naturally avoided as much as possible. Putting aside everything which would make us think of human deliberation, or arbitrary decree, we speak here simply of the design of God to redeem that which was lost through sin.

2. The *existence* of such a plan is partly presupposed, partly emphatically expressed, in Holy Scripture. If there has been often spoken, without sufficient exegetical reasons,[1] in a too sensuous manner, of a "counsel of peace" between the Son of God and the Father, the idea, that God, even where

[1] Compare Zech. vi. 13.

He redeems and restores, only accomplishes what He had Himself willed and determined, is purely Evangelical, and so in the highest degree worthy of God. Not only does the Apostle Paul point to this with emphasis and with marked preference,[2] but even the Lord Jesus Himself speaks here in the most distinct manner.[3] From a belief in an all-embracing Providence of God,[4] follows already, naturally and necessarily, the confession of this truth.

3. As to the *nature* and *contents* of this plan of salvation, we receive sufficient light from the Gospel.—It is *one* and *indivisible*. If dogmatic Scholasticism has not seldom spoken of different Divine decrees (*decreta*), and divided these in various ways,[5] the Gospel everywhere speaks only of *one* design, *one* will, *one* merciful thought of God, of which everything which is done for the salvation of a sinful world is the gradual realisation.—The centre of this plan of salvation is Christ. In Him God has elected the believing, and in Him the plan of the world must attain its completion.[6] He Himself is, *par excellence*, *the* Elect and Beloved of the Father;[7] and in Him redeemed humanity is regarded, and, as it were, included, as under its spiritual head. But yet not in this sense, that God has foreseen the perfect Son of man in mankind, as its future natural product, and consequently was well pleased with a race from which so much that was noble should proceed; but so, that He Himself has given in His Son the new man, as the head to the fallen race, and in Him has actually proved His grace to it.

4. The extent of this plan of salvation is consequently *universal;* it reaches not merely to a few, but to the sinful world in its entirety, as is constantly declared in the Gospel. It is impossible, without arbitrarily distorting the sense, to understand such passages as John iii. 16; 2 Cor. v. 19; 1 Tim. ii. 4; 1 John ii. 2, and many similar statements, in a one-sided particularistic sense. Even other statements of Scripture[8] would be destitute of all meaning, if we might not understand that God seriously desired the salvation of all men. The Gospel indeed teaches, as we shall see in a later part of our treatise, that the Elect are given by the Father to the Son; but nowhere does it declare that the Father has sent that Son into the world solely for the Elect's sake; and it is everywhere declared to be the sinner's own fault if the highest love does not gain its end in him.[9]—Certainly the execution of this plan is *conditional*. God has in no way determined to give salvation to all, regardless of the position in which they may place themselves to the Gospel of salvation, but to those only who are obedient to the claims of faith and repentance; not, indeed, that they, on account of this obedience, could deserve salvation. The word *condition* is incorrectly used here, whenever it suggests some meritorius deed. It denotes nothing but that the absolutely indispensable

[2] Eph. i. 3—12; Col. i. 19, 20.
[3] Matt. xi. 25, 26; John xvii. 2.
[4] Section lix.
[5] As, *e.g.*, into general and special, antecedent and consequent, etc.
[6] Eph. i. 4, 10.
[7] Isa. xlii. 1; Matt. iii. 17; John iii. 35.
[8] *E.g.*, Ezek. xxxiii. 11; Mark xvi. 15, 16; 2 Pet. iii. 9.
[9] Compare Matt. xxiii. 37; Luke vii. 30.

requisite and *ground* of this salvation can never be anything else save God's gracious and unchangeable good-pleasure. God has, according to St. Paul's statement, chosen believers,[10] not because they were, but in order that they might become, holy and blameless. This good-pleasure of His combines, from the nature of the case, all those attributes which must be ascribed to His adorable nature. Like Himself, it is eternal, free, wise, holy, gracious, unchangeable, and therefore for a finite intellect unsearchable.[11] The ultimate aim is, and can be, nothing else than the exaltation of His name, *i.e.*, not merely of one, but of all His virtues; not merely of His sovereignty, and still less of His justice or grace, as opposed one to the other, but of all the riches of His holy love.

5. The *importance* of the doctrine of the Gospel concerning the Divine plan of salvation is self-evident. Where it remains unknown, or is incorrectly viewed, Christian faith and Christian life both must necessarily suffer very severe injury. Specially is an accurate definition of this point of incontestable importance for the cause of a free, sound, and kindly *preaching* of the Gospel. One is not only free, but strongly obliged to preach the Gospel to all without exception, without, on any pretext whatever, diminishing one letter of the command, "Compel them to come in." He who forgets this, and, in an evil hour, chooses as the point of departure for his preaching, in place of the "decretum salutis," the doctrine of "prædestinatio ad salutem," mistakes his calling, increases the most dangerous malady, and even cherishes a miserable heresy under the lofty banner of orthodoxy.[12] The glad tidings must be brought to all, "as many as are called by the Gospel, these are earnestly called."

6. So far all is plain; but the subject becomes more difficult when we come to the question, Why has it pleased God to carry out this design of His by means of a free and gracious *election* (*Prædestinatio*)? We cannot be surprised that the dogma, which this word brings before us, has in one place been contradicted, and in another been an apple of discord of the worst kind. The strife sometimes became so violent, that, when it has paused for a moment, the wish of Herder, "Perish the hand which recalls the struggle from the wide stream of forgetfulness!" seemed conceivable. Yet, from the standpoint of Christian Dogmatics, the question cannot possibly be put aside, least of all where the doctrine of salvation is treated of from the standpoint of the Reformation. The so-called "cor ecclesiæ" needs, and so deserves, an investigation, to which no better place can be devoted than the present. Though the well-known "heus tu, caute de istis agas" of Zwingle must be applied here even more than ever, yet does it not give us any right to sail silently by the rock, rendered notorious by its many shipwrecks.

7. When we speak of Predestination, we express the confession that *every believer, who is saved, is saved in accordance with the will of God, who has called and elected him, as distinguished from the unbeliever, to eternal life.* To the question, Does there exist any ground for speaking in such a sense

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[10] Eph. i. 4.
[11] Rom. xi. 33—36.
[12] Compare Deut., xxix. 29; *Can. Dord.* ii. 5, 6, iii. 8; see Calvin on St. John xii. 47.

of a fore-ordaining to eternal life? we cannot possibly, after a little reflection, give any answer but, Yes.—When we have once placed ourselves at the Christian Theistic standpoint, the *reason* already will judge a proposition acceptable, which is merely the natural consequence of a belief in a special Providence. If this Providence has ordered and ordained everything which relates to the temporal lot and life, it is absolutely inconceivable that man's eternal lot should be determined without God's eternal counsel being fulfilled therein. We can securely say, that he who believes in Providence, but rejects every idea of predestination as folly, is not consistent with himself.—*Holy Scripture*, at any rate, speaks here in such a manner, that all doubt becomes impossible to any one who attaches importance to its utterances. If we consult its letter, there is without doubt a mention of an election even in a completely different sense from that which is here intended,[13] and passages have often been quoted as proofs of the doctrine of predestination, which do not bear closer examination.[14] But yet, even after this sifting, there remain not a few utterances of our Lord and His Apostles, which at any rate it is not possible for *us* to understand in any other sense than that which is attached to them by the supporters of the doctrine of a fore-ordaining to eternal life. Take, *e.g.*, and weigh such passages as Matt. xi. 25, 26; xvi. 17; xx. 23; xxiv. 24; Luke x. 20; John vi. 37—40; xvii. 2, 24. All the Apostles and their contemporary witnesses agree in this with their Master.

Luke, Acts xiii. 48.
James, Ep. i. 18.
Jude, Ep. 1, compare ver. 4.
Peter, 1 Ep. i. 2; ii. 7, 9.
2 Ep. i. 10.
John, Revelation iii. 5; xiii. 8.
Paul, 1 Thess. v. 9.
2 Thess. ii. 13.
Ephes. i. 4.
2 Tim. i. 9.
Rom. viii. 28—30.
Rom. ix.—xi.

Specially do these two last passages merit here close observation; the first, because it offers to us a well-arranged "catena salutis" in its inseparable connexion; the second, because it not only declares, but defends against obstinate denial, God's absolute sovereignty in granting and withholding His highest benefits. It matters little whether an escape is contrived by saying that here there is merely a statement of a general and natural election to the blessings of the kingdom of God. The real participation in the blessings of God's kingdom on earth at the same time includes that in eternal bliss; the whole mass consists of single individuals; and from what the Apostle testifies of Moses and Pharaoh,[15] it is sufficiently apparent why he has not represented the matter with regard to individuals in a different way than with regard to the many. That he considers the rejection of the Jews a consequence of their own guilt,[16] is as certain as that he opens a promising prospect as to the final solution of this mystery.[17] But this does not detract anything from what can be read as plainly in Rom. ix., and a thoroughly impartial judge was quite right in his statement, "It is all singularly clear, and certainly it will never be with exegetical arguments that one can

[13] John vi. 70; xiii. 18.
[14] See Tisch., Matt. xx. 16; xxii. 14; Acts xv. 18.
[15] Rom. ix. 14—18.
[16] Rom. x.
[17] Rom. xi.

henceforth combat a system which men like Augustine, Calvin, and Gomar have built up on these premisses" (Reuss). We meet with something like that we have already met with in the doctrine of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.[18] The dogma does not lie ready prepared in Holy Scripture, but all the stones of the building are there, which only need to be put together, to make the whole building rise in just proportion before our eyes. At any rate, we would not willingly assume as our own the exegetical task of the opponents of this truth.

8. Indeed, the entire *spirit*, no less than the letter, of Holy Scripture gives especially a clear testimony to the doctrine of an election by grace. What else than the independent, and partly at least inscrutable, good-pleasure of God is the cause that the seed of Abraham should be distinguished and highly favoured above all other nations, Jacob above Esau, Judah above all the sons of Jacob, and by-and-by David above his brothers? From the last-named, after a time, is the Elect and Holy One of God born as man among men; but even He chooses and calls again His followers from the crowd, His Apostles from the wider circle, the three confidants from the twelve, and from the three the one John to be His favourite *par excellence*. Certainly, this did not happen without a connexion with natural disposition, capacity, and the proper development of those thus favoured; but, on the other hand, that which was inborn in them would hardly have ripened without the privilege thus given to them. In the co-operation thus apparent between the human and the Divine factor, it is the latter always which, so to speak, settles the point. Hence it comes that, according to Scripture, there lives in the Church the consciousness of having become the heir by grace of the spiritual blessings of Israel, the chosen people by way of pre-eminence. And so it is that still, ever in agreement with reason and Scripture, *the spiritual experience* of believers expresses itself indubitably in favour of this confession. No Christian, however far he looks back on the path of his inner life, will hesitate to give to God all the honour of his admission into the church of the redeemed, and as expressly as possible to reject all self-glorying. In this respect we may look at Rom. iii. 27, the praise of faith in Rom viii. 28—39, and various sacred hymns, which may be called the spiritual expression of a belief built upon the united testimony of the Gospel and Experience.

9. Every one, who really believes in Christ, and on this ground expects salvation, may thus in this privilege acknowledge the fruit of a gracious design for his salvation, and thank God, who has chosen him in Christ from eternity, and in this life called him to a knowledge of the Gospel, brought him to belief, justified him, and in principle, at least, already glorified him. "The Divine plan of salvation cannot otherwise be conceived of, than as it relates definitely to *individuals*, and to the mode and manner in which salvation is realised in them" (Rothe).

Whoever, on the other hand, does not believe, and continues in sin, is lost temporarily and eternally by his own fault, and it is as reasonable as Scriptural to see in this nought less than the fulfilment of God's eternal plan.[19] And yet not so, that we must assume a personal predestination to eternal

[18] Section liv. 6.

[19] John iii. 18, 36.

damnation in the sense in which we have hitherto (in accordance with Scripture) spoken of a personal election to salvation. Much rather must it be plainly stated that the Gospel announces the latter, but nowhere declares the former. According to Jesus' own words,[20] the ungodly go away into everlasting fire, originally prepared, not for them, but for "the devil and his angels," and it is only as a result of inexact exegesis, and an inadmissible "consequenzmacherei," that any other view can be deduced from single passages of Scripture. It is plain from Rom. ix. 20, *sqq.*, that God, according to St. Paul's declaration, has the power to deal with man, as the potter with the clay, but not that He really does so with the sons of men.[21] Prov. xvi. 4 only says, that God has made everything to answer its own destination; so that the wicked can, according to his state, only expect a day of evil. In Isaiah vi. 9, 10, there is undoubtedly mention of a judgment of hardening upon a guilty nature, but that is announced at that time for this reason, that many might thus escape by means of the way shown to them; not to say that no Christian dogma should be built merely on single, isolated expressions of the Old Testament.[22] That the design of God is fulfilled in the judgment of the unbelieving, is taught in the New Testament;[23] but where it speaks of election and predestination, it knows of no other than that in Jesus Christ to life and salvation. In opposition to this there is not an inexorable predestination to destruction, merely because man has fallen *in* Adam—we have already seen that original sin in this sense is nowhere taught in the Gospel[24]—but simply a non-election, "non-discretio e communi massâ perditionis" (Augustine), which, as is evident from the example of Israel in Rom. xi., may even be merely temporary. To be elected, according to the Gospel, is always something joyous, never anything frightful; and the doctrine of reprobation, in the sense of the "gemina prædestinatio," is only a logically natural, but not on that account an absolutely irrefutable, conclusion to the contrary, against which religious as well as moral consciousness must of course be opposed, and for which at least not a single word of the Saviour Himself gives a claim. Even in accordance with the confession of the Dutch Reformed Church, God reveals not His arbitrariness, but His justice, "in that He leaves the others in their fall and destruction, since they have cast themselves therein."[25]

10. What we have already said, naturally leads to the question how far may the Church confession on this point be called the pure expression of revealed truth? Rightly does the Netherlands Church confess "that the Son of God has chosen to Himself from the whole human race a church to eternal life."[26] In order, however, to understand better the teaching on this point, we must call to mind what Calvin has said concerning the *Decretum absolutum*.[27] According to the Reformer, God knows not only who will be saved, or not, but He has fixed this for every one by an irrevocable decree.

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[20] Matt. xxv. 41.
[21] Cf. Jerem. xviii. 5—10.
[22] Section viii. 6.
[23] 1 Pet. ii. 8; Jude 4.
[24] Section lxxv. ii. 5.
[25] *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xvi.
[26] *H. C.*, Ans. 54.
[27] *Inst. R. C.* iii. c. 21—24, compared with *Consensus Pastorum Eccl. Genev. de Eternâ Dei prædestinatione* (1551).

This decree was not first made in consequence of the fall, but must, as quite independent of it, be considered as free and eternal, so that even the fall itself is included in it. In consequence, then, of this decree, as part of mankind is intended to be saved, another part is irrevocably laid under the ban of eternal rejection (*reprobatio*). All are, indeed, outwardly called by the Gospel, but that calling on the part of God, so far as regards the reprobate, is in no way seriously intended. To the elect alone is given the special irresistible grace necessary for belief and conversion; while the rest, even though using outwardly the means of grace, being deprived of His higher aid, do not become better, but worse. Yet in this God acts not with injustice, though His acts are incomprehensible, since He only renders to the sinner, already fallen in Adam, what his own guilt has deserved; while, on the other hand, it is nothing but grace, when He rescues a few from the abyss in which all without distinction were sunk.

11. It is this doctrine,—which, even in Calvin's life, was disputed at Geneva by Castellio and Bolsec; but after his death, by Beza especially, still more urged and developed with almost mathematical accuracy and precision,—which was maintained at the Synod of Dordt in 1618-19, against the Universalism of the Remonstrants; with this qualification, that, while Gomarus and his allies continued to maintain the supralapsarian view, the more moderate (sublapsarian) view obtained the supremacy, and consequently the absolute decree of God was regarded as taken in consequence of the fall in Adam, permitted by Him. Predestination was brought into the closest connexion with the revelation, on one side, of God's grace, on the other, of His justice; and as to the former, special emphasis was laid on this, that the ground of the election was not to be found in any way in the foreseen faith of the elect (*ex prævisâ fide*), but in God's free and unalterable good-pleasure.

From the standpoint of the Reformed Church, the faith given by God is a fruit and evidence of election. With the Remonstrants, on the contrary, the foreseen belief is the reason why men are elected. In the Canons of Dordt, in opposition to the well-known five Articles of the Remonstrants, the dogma is completely developed; it is presented in a like spirit (among others) in the Gallican Confession; whilst the strict Calvinistic (supralapsarian) view is only asserted in one churchly symbol, of later date and slight importance, the *Form. Cons. Helv.* (1675).

12. To arrive at a fair judgment on this question, we must never forget that we have to do with much more than the mere individual system of one reformer. The severely Deterministic view here favoured, could already point to a past of several centuries, before it found its sharply defined expression at Geneva and Dordt. If the fathers of the first three centuries had generally expressed themselves with a considerable degree of indecision upon this delicate subject, Augustine, on the contrary, had emphatically placed the doctrine of a special predestination, as the foundation for that of a special grace, in the foreground in opposition to Pelagius, and Prosper Aquitanus († 455) had very quickly followed his steps. An important step in advance in this path was made in the ninth century by the Frankish monk, Gottschalk († 870), in speaking not merely of rejection,

but of a direct predestination to corruption, and even to error and sin. Among the Scholastics, at least Anselm, Peter Lombard, and Thomas Aquinas, were to a certain point in favour of the Augustinian view; and long before the Reformation, Thomas Bradwardine († 1349) and John Wickliff († 1384) had in England supported the idea of a rigorous predestination. Among the Reformers, Zwingle was already, before Calvin, a consistent Determinist; the conflict between Luther and Erasmus on Free Will (1526) had not led the former to any other result, and even Melancthon, in the first editions of his *Loci*, had favoured the same views. It was in later days, when the doctrine of co-operation had appeared with a force before unknown in the Lutheran Church, and the doctrine of the *decretum conditionatum* had been fixed in its Creeds, that the difference in principle between the Swiss and Lutheran Reformers was first felt in all its sharpness, and the history of Dogma has acquainted us with the bitter strife which it caused among the sons of the same house. The more ought it to be remarked, that the strongest opposition could not prevent Calvinism from forcing its roots deep into the ground of several countries and churches; just as the ban of Rome has not been able to prevent the views of Augustine from appearing with new strength among the Jansenists. Though opposed with all kinds of weapons by the Arminians, Socinians, the later Rationalists, as well as by the Anabaptists, Quakers, and others, it still continues to maintain its ground, lives constantly in the conscious faith of the noblest and most earnest sons of the Reformation; and now, in our century, specially by means of Schleiermacher's influence, has been brought to renewed honour in the domain of science. Even the Modern Theology has now and then, not without a certain satisfaction, proclaimed its homogeneity in principle with Calvinism. So it is certainly not untimely to examine this theory somewhat more closely in the light pointed out in Art. vii. of the Netherlands Confession.

13. If we do this, then must we above all confess that the doctrine of Calvin, from a logical standpoint, is excellently conceived, and, so far, may be called a striking monument of the power of thought and strength of mind. For clearness and consistency it cannot be valued too highly, and the superiority of Calvinism above all other systems is plainly estimated, even by its opponents. It is an expression of the feeling of our absolute dependence upon God, and of our complete unworthiness in His sight upon the point of eternal salvation, which is drawn out as sharply as possible. The very thought that the fall of the first man must be excluded from the Divine predestination, Calvin can only regard as a *frigidum commentum*; and even though he confesses that the doctrine of reprobation is a *decretum horribile*, he yet declares it, since he sees that he cannot yield it without injuring the unity of his system. Thus his definition stands fast, "Cadit homo, Dei providentiâ sic ordinante," though there must at once be added, on the other hand, "Sed suo vitio cadit." By this last statement he seeks to escape the conclusion that God must necessarily be the cause of sin; but, with the exception of this one point, he does not retreat before a single conclusion from the premisses from which he starts. "La grandeur de Calvin," says Vinet, "est d'avoir su se retenir sur une pente horrible." Human thought, justice, compassion, must all retire into the shade before that which God's honour

is once seen to require. "Hic obmutescere oportet tam dicaces alioqui linguas." The sharp contrast between the revealed will and the secret counsel of God enables him, as it seems, to overcome every doubt, while it is easy enough for him to prove that difficulties of no less importance occur to his opponents from their standpoints. Not one link, in short, in the chain of his reasoning can be broken; and while the apparently much more rational view of Luther is accused, and that not entirely unreasonably, of an "unsteady oscillation to and fro,"[28] from Calvin, at least, no one will withhold the praise that, even in this domain, he proved himself a thoroughly consistent man. No wonder that the relative truth and high value of his system, after former undeserved misconception, has been anew recognised in our days by dogmatists of distinction and influence. It may safely be predicted, that the future development of the doctrine of salvation will in no case start from a mere superficial disavowal of this grand and masterly structure.

14. Yet will this future doctrine, we dare conjecture, just as much hesitate to accept the Calvinistic theory in all its details as the accurate expression of revealed truth, and as the last words of Christian science in this mysterious domain. We may safely confess that Calvin has declared a great truth, without, on that account, considering his system as the adequate expression of the full truth. To us, at least, it seems incontestable, that the great question is viewed here only from one, *i.e.*, the Divine side, without permitting the opposite declarations, both of Holy Scripture and of the Christian consciousness, to attain their proper force. If the dialectic-reasoning intellect is of the highest value in the domain of Theology, we consider the doctrine of Calvin irrefutable; but if the human soul and the Christian conscience have the right of voting here, we cannot be surprised that only a relatively small number have had the moral courage to follow the line of thought of the Reformer to the extreme. Many words, at any rate, in the Gospel, which testify of an universal plan of salvation, and know of no other hindrances to the salvation of the sinner save those within himself, can, from this standpoint, be only cleared away by means of an exegesis, in some degree forced and arbitrary. From this standpoint there is not merely a subjective, but an objective, contrast between God's revealed and hidden will; and to him who has once got behind the secret, the first becomes nothing but a pure illusion. It is true, when beginning our reasoning from the conception of God, we must inevitably come upon the line of Calvinism; but when, on the other hand, we start from man, we come just as necessarily to the opposite position, and the higher Theanthropological unity in which the two lines meet is to *our* view at least not in this way presented. If Calvinism can find a powerful support in the religious feeling, the moral consciousness, on the other hand, opposes it with no slight force; and the voice of every human heart, which is raised against an absolute *decretum reprobationis*, may not be indefinitely rejected as a voice of flesh and blood. Even Logic runs the risk of becoming illogical when it will not be illuminated by the Logos, and transfers its inexorable conclusions to God's ways and works, without

[28] Strauss. *a. a. O.*, ii. 442.

asking whether there are moral grounds which invite us to an opposite conclusion. The honour of God may even require that, in our reasoning, we should rather be holily inconsequent, than, from respect to a syllogism, be guilty of blasphemy against God. Yet here we have to do with something higher than abstract ideas—even with living realities; not merely with the master and his tools, but with that holy Love which executes its adorable resolves by means of the freedom conferred by itself.[29]

15. And if even after Calvin the problem remains unsolved, we must not think that whatever has afterwards been brought forward either to soften or to develop his doctrine, while the principle is retained, raises us entirely above these and other difficulties. The hypothetical Universalism of the Saumur Theologians[30]—to mention only a few examples—put prominently forward, indeed, that God wills the salvation of all men, but nevertheless maintained that only the elect can tread the way thereto, and in the attempt thus to reconcile Universalism and Particularism, gained the reputation of greater moderation, at the cost only of consistency.—The sympathy shown by Schleiermacher and his friends for Calvinism, does not prevent its becoming in their hands something totally different from what it originally was. Where the election relates not to the state after death, but only to the earlier or later coming to Christ, the whole matter becomes simply a question of time, and the doctrine of the Apokatastasis, so inexorably rejected by Calvin, becomes the Gordian sword, by which the entangled mesh is easily cut through.—Least of all does the modern Determinism deserve to be welcomed as a new and better edition of the ancient Calvinism. The two start from a view of the world, which is quite distinct in principle, and the idea of guilt, so emphatically maintained by Calvin, is here entirely lost.—But neither does the cloud vanish from before our eyes, when we either entirely deny the doctrine of predestination to salvation, or consider the ultimate ground of this predestination as placed in man himself. Or is not this last especially in irreconcilable conflict with the result of proper theological thought, and real spiritual experience? Is not the highest comfort of the faithful, and their greatest power for sanctification, injured in this way? Aye, and may not Indeterminism as easily lead to Atheism, as the contrary to Fatalism?

16. And so, after all, the conclusion cannot be difficult. Undoubtedly does the Calvinistic doctrine of election to life deserve a preference above all other churchly dogmatic developments, which are placed alongside or opposite it. It announces a glorious truth, taught in the Gospel of the Scriptures; but of which it is not at any rate given to *us* to denote the harmony with other equally undeniable utterances of Scripture and conscience, so satisfactorily as to have no single difficulty remaining. Gladly would we look for this indication from others who scarcely can find words enough to praise the Calvinistic Particularism—provided they express themselves clearly and plainly, and employ no church flag to cover a cargo of wholly Unreformed and, what signifies more, Unscriptural ideas. The attempt to apprehend and develop more profoundly the doctrine of the Divine plan of salvation undoubtedly belongs to the task which

[29] Compare § lxii. 11. [30] See the *Traité sur la Prédestination* of Amyraut. 1634.

Christian science has to fulfil; but whether it will ever perfectly succeed, at any rate still remains a question: it will certainly approach more easily to its end when we follow the historico-empiric path, rather than that of mere speculation. Reasonable as it is, in agreement with Scripture, to speak of an individual election to eternal life, and happy as it is to comfort oneself therewith, equally presumptuous is it to elevate this personal comfort to a system which would explain nothing less than the entire relation between God and man.

17. Whatever mysteries, however, remain, this much is easily seen, that not a few of the objections, which in all ages have been made to the dogma in question, rest in a great degree in misconception or exaggeration. To the reproach that this dogma exhibits a *fatalistic* character, we may reply, that *Fatalism* may much more be called the caricature of Scriptural predestination. We do not here speak of an inexorable and blind fate, which rules everything, even the Godhead itself; but of a holy, wise, and merciful good-pleasure, which, while very far from treating man as a machine, accomplishes the design of His love, in complete accordance with the natural and moral constitution of man. "Election is not merely a heavenly decree of God, which is only realised in positive fate. It is much more realised from within, through the religious disposition which composes the internal characteristic of human nature" (Lange).—Still less can it be called *unjust* that God even in the spiritual domain does not give the same privileges to all. Even with respect to the diversity of gifts in the domain of the mind, fortune, etc., this objection to a certain degree exists, without however justifying the surrender of the belief in the righteousness of God's love. Has God no right to do with His own as He will? is He in any way indebted to any creature? and is it as yet proved of all whom we cannot yet number among the elect, that they will continue till the end beyond the kingdom of God? Will Israel be the only one, on whose face alone the vail was for a time placed? was not St. Paul before a persecutor of the Church? and in any case is not the complaint of injustice premature, so long as the Divine plan is still so far from being completed?—Least of all is there ground for the reproach that this doctrine makes God the cause of evil, and thus renders man either careless or desperate. That the misuse of this truth, like that of every other, may lead to misery of different kinds, is evident; but this proves nothing in itself against the accuracy of our statement. So long as with regard to sin we only maintain the distinction between permission and predestination, we run no risk of thinking blasphemously of the Holy One. The belief in His eternal decree, in consequence of which only the believer is saved, is as little a pretext for sloth, as the recognition of a Divine government of the world dispenses with the duty of human activity. Whoever finds here leave for carelessness and sin, shows by this, that he belongs only in appearance, and not in reality, to God's elect and loved ones. In the well-known case of the man who amused himself by saying that he was a "predestined thief," he fully deserved the answer that "*he was predestined to be hanged.*" In opposition to such fatal eccentricities stands the important fact, that none of the Reformers has done more service to Christian morals than the man of so many reproaches, Calvin.

18. There is no reason for banishing the doctrine of Predestination to life from the public preaching of the Gospel. Much rather is it of great importance in these days to maintain it rightly against so much theoretical and practical Pelagianism. But in no case are we at liberty to separate this truth from its foundation, given in the Evangelical revelation of the decree of redemption; and still less to contrast it with this latter in such a manner that the announcement of God's counsel for the salvation of a lost world thus degenerates in the end into an unmeaning mystification. Let us here speak of predestination as St. Paul, who treats of it expressly and at length, not in Rom. i., but in Rom. viii., and with the prudence of the Heidelberg Catechism, which mentions it but once, in Ans. 54, but nowhere speaks of a predestination to perdition. Let us place, too, in the foreground, that God *seriously* wills the salvation of all; that there is nought else but a "reprobatio *consequens*" as the result of one's own obstinate resistance; that no one is doomed to be lost, merely because it was once thus decreed with regard to him; and that personal belief, without any further extraordinary revelation, is the unmistakable sign of our calling and election to life. So for these reasons let the preacher excite men to ardent gratitude, continual sanctification,[31] and a joyous exultation of faith (Rom. viii. 28—30). Like St. Paul,[32] let us resist the obstinate contradiction of haughty unbelief, and comfort those desirous of salvation with the announcement of a full and free Gospel, whereby no one is excluded, who does not exclude himself. The more, too, the statement of this part of the truth of salvation exhibits a Christo-centric character—in accordance with Augustine's saying, "Christus præclarissimum lumen prædestinationis et gratiæ"—the less need we fear its misuse, the more abundant fruit may we expect. Here specially is a source of comfort and strength to the suffering and struggling faith, which can neither be fathomed nor exhausted. But the science of faith finds here on the one side a point of departure, and on the other a goal, for its sanctified reflection, than which none more firm or more beautiful can be conceived.[33] Placed in the full light of the pure Gospel, the "cor ecclesiæ" is alike the "thesaurus fidei" and the "lumen scientiæ nostræ."

Compare LANGE'S article *Vorherbestimmung*, in Herzog, *R. E.*, xvii.; and on the Biblical doctrine of predestination, especially that of Rom. ix.—xi., the well-known Writings of E. W. KRUMMACHER (1856), J. A. LAMPING (1858), and W. BEYSCHLAG (1868); on the Church teaching, see A. SCHWEITZER, *Glaubensl. der Ref. Kirche* (1844), i., § 8, *sqq.*; *Centraldogmen*, ii. (1856), § i., *sqq.*; SCHOLTEN, ii. bl. 455, *sqq.* (4th ed.); J. J. v. TOORENENBERGEN, *t. a. p.* on Artt. 16 and 17 of the *N. C.*; J. P. LANGE, *Welche Geltung gebührt der Eigenthümlichk. der Ref. K. u. s. w.*, in his *Verm.-Schrif. neue Folge*, ii. 1 (1860). As an attempt to point out the higher unity in the Reformed and Lutheran teaching of predestination, its treatment by MARTENSEN, *a. a. O.*, p. 399, *sqq.*, deserves special mention. As a model of homiletic treatment, see the discourses of A. DES AMORIE V. D. HOEVEN (1848) on Rom. viii. 28—30. Comp. J. J. v. OOSTERZEE, *Geloofsroem*, published in *Woorden des Levens* (3rd ed., 1867), bl. 239; and a Sermon of A. KUIJPER, in his Second Series (1870), bl. 1, *sqq.*

[31] Ephes. i. 3, 4; 2 Pet. i. 10.
[32] Rom. ix. 16—23.
[33] Compare Rom. v. 20, 21; xi. 32—36.

Points for Inquiry.

Why does the treatment of the *decretum salutis* precede that of *prædestinatio ad salutem* in Christian Dogmatics?—Maintenance of the Evangelical Universalism against every arbitrary, exegetical, or philosophical limitation.—The foundation of the Evangelical doctrine of predestination in the Old Testament.—Further setting forth of the exegetical proof.—History of the dogma before the Reformation.—The difference in principle between the Reformed and Lutheran views.—The decision of the Synod of Dordt on the Five Articles of the Remonstrants of 1610.—Meaning and importance of the distinction between the Supralapsarian and Sublapsarian views.—The Theologians of Saumur.—Schleiermacher contrasted with Calvin.—Later disputes within and without the Reformed Church.—Is it necessary to cling to the doctrine of absolute and eternal reprobation?—Is complete and severe consistency on this point necessary and possible?—Calvinism contrasted with Modernism, and in relation to the Ethical School.—The only safe way to a further successful treatment of the Dogma.—Comfort and force of this truth.

SECTION LXXXIII.—THE FIRST RAYS OF LIGHT.

The revelation of the mystery of the Divine plan of salvation was not made at once, but gradually, and with the most careful preparation. Scarcely has the night of sin descended, before the first rays of light rise in the promises of salvation made to Adam, Shem, and the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; while the whole of the earliest history of man, before the flood, as well as during the patriarchal era, is in direct connexion with this preparation for the work of Redemption.

1. As we have henceforth to watch the development of the Divine plan of salvation in its historic course, we must go back in thought to the cradle of mankind, and for this purpose make use of the oldest Bible-documents, whose historical truth and value is recognised by Christian Dogmatics, while referring as far as is necessary to what has elsewhere been said in support of this authority. Of course this preliminary history can here only be sketched in its general outline. Still no single link in this chain must be entirely overlooked, because the gradual development of the revelation is one of the greatest proofs of its all-surpassing excellence.[1]

2. Hardly is sin in the world before the seeking love of God begins its long work.[2] The first "Adam, where art thou?" gives evidence of this at once in a striking manner; and still more the enmity which God immediately places between the tempter and his victim. Just as the work of creation, so does the work of re-creation at once begin by separating light from darkness. Specially, however, does the well-known mother-promise[3] cause a first friendly ray to rise upon the night of sin. There is as

[1] Compare § xxxiii. 3. [2] Compare *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xvii. [3] Gen. iii. 15, 16.

little reason for the common rationalistic explanation which will only regard it as the hostility between men and serpents, as for the old orthodox idea, which finds here at once a definite, direct, and absolute announcement of the Messiah. Undoubtedly Christ is in the promise, but only as the oak is already in the acorn, or the perfect writing in the first unpractised strokes of the pen. The notion of *Seed* in the first and second half of the promise can only be understood in its collective meaning; a wide circle is thus revealed to our eye, whose unalterable, but still concealed, centre is the God-man. No less and no more is announced, than that henceforth there will be an irreconcilable contest between mankind and the kingdom of darkness, in which the first will be sensibly wounded, but the last will at length be completely conquered in and by the first. This conflict, begun long before Christ, but decided in principle by His death on the cross, is continued on an ever greater scale within and by His Church, until the completion of the ages; and it was, perhaps, not without an allusion to the Paradise gospel that St. Paul promised to the Church "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet."[4]

3. No further revelation of salvation, so far as we know, is made up to the time of the Flood. And yet we are not entirely without proofs, that the light, rekindled in Eden, has in no way disappeared from the view of the first inhabitants of the earth. An indefinite feeling of hope is heard in the words spoken by Eve, at the birth of Cain;[5] and also by Lamech[6] at that of Noah. But in vain, "sicut Heva fallitur, ita quoque nimio desiderio restitutionis mundi fallitur ille bonus Lamechus" (Luther). For the present the want of a renewed communion with God can only find satisfaction in prayers and sacrifice. We have not premisses enough to determine whether this service of sacrifice sprang from a purely human feeling, or from a direct Divine command, or from a union and meeting of the two. But certainly, this form of worship must receive an increased consecration from the marked approval granted to Abel's sacrifice,[7] and in later times could more easily become the type of the salvation of the New Testament. Round the altar of Enos[8] we presently see the first church assembled, and even in the midst of the increasing corruption there still remain a few who are true to God, who are by-and-by represented by Enoch.[9] His walk with God in a holy familiarity shows that the image of God in mankind had not yet hopelessly disappeared. His prophecy, the most ancient known,[10] speaks of God coming to judge the wicked, and for that very reason to redeem all who continue to look for a higher salvation. His translation without dying,[11] reveals anew to a race, forgetful of God, the existence of a holy and omniscient God, of a life after death, and of a certain retribution.

4. That retribution comes at its proper time, but Noah finds grace in the eyes of the Lord, and *after the Flood* we see the preparation for the revelation of salvation advanced a step. The preservation bestowed upon

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[4] Rom. xvi. 20.
[5] Gen. iv. 1.
[6] Gen. v. 29.
[7] Gen. iv. 4.
[8] Gen. iv. 26.
[9] Gen. v. 24.
[10] Jude 14, 15.
[11] Heb. xi. 5, 6.

a chosen part of mankind proves already that there are still and ever in God's heart thoughts of peace, even when His hand is stretched out to destroy. Noah comes forth as prophet, priest, and king, the new parent of mankind, as before the first Adam had been; and at the same time a type in a degree of Him who should come. With him God makes a covenant,[12] in which He renews the former promise of salvation made to the old world; while the covenant-law, given in the so-called Noachic commandments,[13] exhibits the unmistakable attempt to check the renewed outburst of moral evil, at least in its rudest form. Specially does the prophetic blessing, pronounced on Shem above his brothers,[14] offer a striking hint for the future. The God of Shem will particularly reveal His highest favour to him, and Japhet, dwelling in the tents of Shem, will thus become also a partaker of his spiritual privileges. "Here first flashes out in the most general outlines the thought, which is soon more plainly expressed in the history of the Patriarchs, that the salvation of the nations will come from the bosom of Shem" (Tuch). The promise, made to this son of Noah, forms as it were the transition between the earliest Universalism and the later Particularism of the revealed salvation; and where we see this last now and again come out from its former premisses, there is it constantly evident, that the supranaturalistic conception of the Divine record is at the same time the properly organic one.

5. Soon, alas! it is plain that the new world has remained in almost every respect the old, only with this distinction, that the complete desertion of God in the earlier world has been followed by a polytheism and idolatry which makes a great change in the revelation of the Divine plan of salvation absolutely necessary. From the tree of the Semitic race, to which was given the Divine promise, a single branch is separated, planted in a strange soil, carefully tended, and developed into a tree, which soon with twelve strong branches casts its shadow over Canaan. In *Ur of the Chaldees*, where it originally worshipped idols,[15] is Abraham's race elected to preserve for a later and better time the knowledge and service of the one true God. Abraham, a rock—not in the sense of the criticism of these days, but in that of Isaiah li. 1,—becomes the spiritual ancestor of the faithful, whose name and reputation soon fills the whole East, and still continues to live in a venerated memory among the professors of the three religions of the world. If we believe in a personal living God, we shall not then esteem it inconceivable, but much rather most worthy of God, that He, who in His Son will enter into a renewed relation with man, now communicates more specially with a highly privileged person and race. Great and divine thoughts of salvation, still far removed from realisation, cannot be communicated at all, or only to a select few, and the entire Particularism, which was preceded and succeeded by Universalism, was, besides, merely temporary, and only a means of transition. Thus God makes a covenant with Abraham and his race; *i.e.*, God places Himself in a definite relation to him, marked on one side by the best of promises, on the other by the holiest duties. The foundation of the covenant dates

[12] Gen. ix. 17.
[13] Gen. ix. 4, *sqq.*
[14] Gen. ix. 26, 27.
[15] Josh. xxiv. 2.

from the calling of Abraham—not from the time of Moses—and the giving of the law upon Sinai, in after days, was only a renewing and confirming of it. It is a special covenant with a single people, with an unlimited prospect of matchless salvation for the world.

6. In *Canaan* we soon see new rays of light break through the dark clouds. The founding of Monotheism in one house and race, from which it will never afterwards be uprooted, in this connexion becomes a fact of utmost significance. Even though it had not died out in other places,[16] and at times it was still accompanied by the worship of idols among the race of Abraham,[17] it is soon seen that this race takes a higher place in the ethico-religious domain, than all the other descendants of Shem. The God, who is here adored, is the God of Vision, the Almighty, the Righteous One, the Omnipresent.[18] Whatever weakness we may see disclosed in Abraham, he never for a moment yields to the temptation of the Canaanitish idolatry, and the result of the heaviest trial of his faith[19] can only serve to place an impassable gulf between his religion and theirs. The unity of God is here firmly established, and—it lies in the nature of the case that the highest salvation of the world can only come from a Monotheistic race. Besides, we see at once, in connexion with this belief, a much higher development of the religious and moral life here, than is elsewhere found. With all their failings and weaknesses the Patriarchs stand far above their contemporaries, as bearers of the special revelations of God. They feel and show themselves strangers, not merely in Canaan,[20] but on the earth, who live less for the present than in the future life. From the consciousness of their personal relation to God is developed a hope, as yet more fixed than clear, which reaches beyond this present life.[21] All this, though in a lessened degree, passed to their children, and made them not only long for a higher revelation, but more capable of receiving it.

7. The definite promises of this period more especially attract our attention. They are the first to which express reference is made in the New Testament.[22] Thrice to Abraham, and by-and-by to Isaac and Jacob also, it is said that "in their seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed."[23] It is thus plainly declared that Abraham was to be a *source* of blessing to the whole world, though the nature of that blessing was as yet as little definitely announced, as was the descendant of Abraham, who should be the means of this highest salvation. True, that in two at least of these passages[24] we may also translate (in Hithpael) "in you and your seed shall all races bless *themselves*;" in other words, so great shall your blessing be, that the announcement of it will become a formula of blessing for all nations.[25] But in the three other passages the translation (in Niphal), "*be*

[16] Gen. xiv. 18.
[17] Gen. xxxv. 1—7.
[18] Gen. xvi. 13; xvii. 1; xviii. 25; xxviii. 16.
[19] Gen. xxii. 14.
[20] Heb. xi. 13—16.
[21] Gen. xlix. 18.
[22] Gal. iii. 8, *sqq.*
[23] Gen. xii. 3; xviii. 18; xxii. 18; xxvi. 4; xxviii. 14.
[24] Gen. xxii. 18; xxvi. 4.
Compare Gen. xlviii. 20.

blessed," is the most exact, and it plainly expresses that all races not only *promise* themselves and each other a blessing as great as that of Abraham, but would actually *receive* it in and through him. No wonder that this promise continually echoes through the writings of the Old and the New Testament.[26] Whatever mysteriousness they might as yet retain for Abraham, is diminished by the legitimate conjecture that the Patriarch did not entirely fail of a still nearer revelation of the future day of salvation;[27] while besides, in this epoch we must not overlook the first appearance of that entirely unique Angel of the Lord, who long before the Incarnation of the Logos, was not only the messenger of God's revelation, but the bearer of His name and glory.

8. We see that the golden line, which begins to show itself, is only apparently broken off for an instant *in Egypt*. If separation from Heathendom was the first link, oppression was the second in the chain of God's guidance of the elect race. Thus only could Israel become a nation, drawn together more closely than twelve different shepherd tribes, and preserved from the abominations of Canaanitish idolatry, without running the risk of mixing with it in Egypt, where the shepherd was an abomination to the people. Nothing but oppression and slavery in the foreign land could lay the foundation of that kind of hostility which was, for a healthy religious life in Israel, to exist between it and the heathen world. There, first of his nation, did Joseph, the one set apart from among his brethren, tread the path which leads through suffering to glory. But there, too, did the dying Jacob[28] speak to Judah the great words which promised to him rule and honour "until Shiloh come" (in other words, the rest = the Rest-bringer), whom the nations should obey. Before his failing eye seems for the first time to rise in the far distance the image of a Prince of Peace, soon to be delineated by Israel's singers and seers with the choicest lines. "The personal conception of the שִׁילֹה is in most beauteous harmony with the constant progress of the revelation of salvation" (Keil).

Compare, as to the credibility of the history of salvation in Genesis in general, the already mentioned writings of LANGE, KEIL, HENGSTENBERG, and others; BUNSEN, *Bibelwerk*, v. 1 (1860), pp. 43—104, and G. EBERS, *Ægypte und die Bücher Mosis.*, i. (1868). As to the most ancient promises of salvation, J. J. v. OOSTERZEE, *Christologie*, i. (1855), bl. 75, *sqq.*; G. K. MAYER, *Die Patriarchal. Verheissungen* (1859). Upon the Angel of Jehovah, LANGE, *Genesis* (1864), pp 97—202, and the literature mentioned there.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Further discussion of the most important passages treated here, and maintenance of their Soteriological significance.—How to explain the extremely slow course and still indefinite character of the revelations of God's Salvation.—Criticism of the opposite principle and aim.

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[26] See, *e.g.*, Ps. lxxii. 17; Acts iii. 25, 26; Eph. i. 3.
[27] John viii. 56.
[28] Gen. xlix. 10.

SECTION LXXXIV.—MOSAISM.

Still more has Mosaism, itself only explicable as the fruit of a special revelation, been, for the Israelitish people, in many ways, the powerful agent in preparing the way for the development of the Divine plan of salvation. Not only the law given by Moses, but the entire religion established by Moses, and the government of God founded by Moses, may be called, in St. Paul's words, a "schoolmaster to Christ."

1. With Mosaism we enter upon a new period of development in the preparation for a higher revelation, a period which differs in many respects from the preceding. It bears throughout the character of a period of transition, in which Particularism becomes the means to lead the way to subsequent Universalism. It is closely allied to the person and work of Moses, and, even where it accepts new elements,[1] runs incessantly forward to the fulness of time.[2]

2. Mosaism comes forth in history, not only as the revelation of the religious spirit in Israel, but as the fruit of a special intervention of God, which now made itself known to Moses—as before to the Patriarchs—and made him the mediator of the Old Covenant. Naturally, we cannot here treat of the person and history of Moses himself; but it is enough, that the revealed character of his religion is not only established by many voices, and announced in a succession of facts, but is most emphatically supported by the testimony of the Lord and His Apostles. Neither Monotheism in Israel, nor the personality of Moses himself, nor the ethical and prophetical peculiarity of his religion, nor the earlier or later history of his people, are explicable from Naturalistic premisses. "As little is the national spirit of Israel the holy spirit of Revelation, as is the spirit of Moses, as such, the founder of the Old Testament religion—but it is the Divine creative Spirit which is witnessed in the human spirit, and which by redemption and reconciliation leads mankind to life in Christ" (Schultz). First by reason of this its character does Mosaism occupy, in the revelation of the Divine economy, a really different place from that which can, *e.g.*, be ascribed to Parseeism or Buddhism.

3. Already was the separation and call of Moses in itself a proof that God continued to think of His covenant with Abraham and his seed. Even the miraculous deliverance of Israel by him was intended to advance and prepare for the revelation of God's name in the heathen world.[3] But specially must the Mosaic *law*, whose main contents are the ten commandments, according to St. Paul's statement, be the schoolmaster to Christ,[4] for

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[1] Sections lxxxv., lxxxvi.
[2] Section lxxxix.
[3] Exod. ii. 23—26; xv. 14—16.
[4] Gal. iii. 24.

the child still under age, and easily led away. It was indeed intended, *partly* morally to develop the nation, and at any rate to preserve it from the wildest outbursts of the worst evils; *partly* to reveal sin, as sin, by putting it in the strongest light;[5] *partly*, in the last place, by this means to excite the feeling of guilt and the need of grace, without which we cannot seriously speak of a moral capacity for deliverance. The abundant contents, as well as the categorical and prohibitive form, of the law was excellently adapted to attain this triple object, and the history of the most distinguished men, *e.g.*, David, Isaiah, Daniel, John the Baptist, St. Paul and others, shows that this Divine institution has even in this respect borne most abundant fruit. The law remains even after the fulness of time—as is evident from history and the nature of the case—intended for, and suited to this end, and it is entirely in accordance with the spirit of the New Testament that the Dogmatics of the Reformation has so emphatically enforced the *usus elenchticus seu pædagogicus legis*.

4. Not only the law, but the entire *religion* of Moses exhibits in different ways a prophetic character. Already had the *idea of God*, as it is announced here, in which the holiness and supreme majesty of God are prominent,[6] although the idea of His mercy and grace is by no means wanting,[7] already had this Mosaic conception of God the natural aim of exciting a deep feeling of sin.—The *sacrifices* and solemnities satisfied on the one hand the need of communion with God, but at the same time caused a longing look for a time in which that communion should be more true and complete. Markedly is the sacrifice of expiation in its different forms here of great significance. He who brought it declared in other words that he had deserved death for a crime which, by the laying on of the hand, was symbolically transferred to the offering, and on the other hand received in the blood-sprinkling the assurance that guilt was done away and covered as it were by a veil of blood before God's holy eye. But when we consult the Scriptures of the New Testament, then had the whole sacrificial system, besides this direct aim, a still more extended meaning. It must be the typico-symbolical announcement of a salvation, which would first be brought into the world in later days in its full reality, by the intervention of a perfect offering.[8]—Finally, in the days and from the standpoint of the law, there were not wanting more direct prophetic *prospects* which stand in manifest connexion with the development of the hope of salvation. We allude here even in some measure to the remarkable utterance of Balaam,[9] which has not, indeed, a direct Messianic significance, but yet opens up a prospect of kingly rule and victory, most grandly realised in the house of David; but more particularly to the promise which Moses by reason of a special revelation pronounced before his departure,[10] that a Prophet like himself should rise up from the midst of his brethren, whom they must hear. Though the connexion does not permit us to understand here the word נָבִיא (just as זֶרַע Gen. iii. 15), in anything but a collective sense, yet here the Prophetic condition is denoted in the form of an ideal personality, like

[5] Rom. iii. 20; v. 20; vii. 7.
[6] Lev. xix. 2.
[7] Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.
[8] See Col. ii. 17; Heb. x.; and many other places.
[9] Num. xxiv. 17.
[10] Deut. xviii. 15—18.

to Moses himself; an ideal, as is evident from the issue, first fully realised in Him, with respect to whom was heard the heavenly "Hear Him." Hence, even in the days of the New Testament the Messias was with the highest right regarded as the crown of Prophetism.[11]

5. Even the whole *Theocracy* established by Moses, stood in close connexion with the Kingdom of God founded by Christ. By its institution Israel was actually distinguished from all other nations, and thus raised far above them.[12] By its revelation through direct Divine interpositions was faith strengthened, but at the same time the desire for further revelation was quickened. By its maintenance in continual judgments the national conscience was sharpened, and the name of the Lord made known far beyond the limits of the chosen people. Yea, the whole dwelling of God in the midst of His people may be called the shadow and prophecy of the blessing to be first fulfilled at a much later time.[13] Here is there not merely, as in the heathen world, a dim instinct of mankind to enter into communion with God, but a drawing nigh of God to man, a bowing down on His side, who will not rest till the last wall of partition has fallen, which still separates the sinner from his Maker.

6. Thus Mosaism as a whole displays not merely a propædeutic-pædagogic, but a typico-symbolic character; indeed, "the entire Old Testament is one great Prediction, one great Type of Him who should come, and is come" (De Wette). Undoubtedly has the so-called Typical Theology, in earlier days supported by Jewish Theologians, and afterwards by Christian Fathers, and specially favoured in the Reformed Church by Coccejus, d'Outrein, van Til, Witsius, Vitringa, and others, gained a sad notoriety by the numerous plays of false wit to which it gave occasion. But even here the abuse does not condemn the use, and he who denies the existence of all symbols and types in Mosaism, directly contradicts, not merely Peter, Paul, and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, but the Lord Himself. The proposition, that the cultus of the Old Testament displays a typico-symbolic character, is not in itself unacceptable, and by comparison with other ancient religions at once obtains a high degree of probability. But particularly when, in accordance with the Gospel, we believe in the design of Mosaism to point out a higher revelation, and to prepare Israel for it, does Typology, if confined within suitable limits, belong to the organism of the Revelation of Salvation. "The idea of typical development is inseparable from that of a teleological development, where the present is big with the future" (Martensen). If already in the domain of nature we see the higher in a certain respect announced and foreshadowed by the preceding lower, why should not the same rule hold good in the kingdom of grace, where everything, either directly or indirectly, is striving towards a preordained centre? Only let us take care, never to separate the typical in certain persons or things (typi *personales* et *reales*), from the symbolism of the whole religious dispensation to which it necessarily belongs; nor lose sight of the distinction

[11] Compare John iv. 25; vi. 14; Acts iii. 22, 23.
[12] Compare Exod. iv. 22; Deut. vii. 6.
[13] John i. 14; Rev. xxi. 3.

between mere comparisons and agreements,[14] and types and symbols of the New Testament directly ordained of God; nor point out any other traits in Mosaism, as such, but those which the Lord Himself and His first witnesses point out in the New Testament Scriptures; and specially let us not overlook the distinction between the capacity and needs of children, who must be fed with milk, and those of full age, who must have strong meat. Typology is only then to be admitted, where the words of Hebrews vi. 1, 2, are our motto.

7. "So, as it were still concealed in the bud, are all the impulses of Israel's hope of salvation already enclosed in this period" (Schultz). It will indeed be always difficult to answer the question, how far this prophetic side of Mosaism was understood and comprehended in the days of the Old Testament. Of the more cultivated at least we know, that they saw the unsatisfactoriness of the external form of religion, and often expressed loudly the necessity for a spiritual sacrifice.[15] Men saw even in the law depths which only could be penetrated by a Divine light.[16] If we may assume with some that along with the Scriptures of the Old Testament a word-of-mouth tradition of the Divine mysteries of salvation was preserved and extended as a precious treasure, in this way certainly many a want is provided for. By-and-by, too, Prophetism began gradually to supply what was wanting in Mosaism, and whatever the clearness of the prospects thus revealed might leave to be desired, their steadfastness for the belief in God never could be shaken. Viewed in the light of the event, it cannot for a moment be doubted, "that though the ceremonies and figures of the law ceased at the coming of Christ, still their truth and substance remains in Christ." (*N. C.*, Art. xxv.)

Comp. CALVIN, *Instit.* ii., ch. 7; A. DILLMANN, *Ueber dem Ursprung der A. T. Religion* (1865); L. KUEPER, *Das Priesterth des A. B.* (1865); R. KUEBEL, *Das A. T. Gezetz und seine Urkunde, u. s. w.* (1867); H. SCHULTZ, *Alt. Testamentl. Theol.* i. (1869), p. 86, *sqq.*; and, as regards particulars, J. J. v. OOSTERZEE, *The Bibl. Theol. of N. T.* (Eng. trans.), p. 4, and the literature quoted there; also *Christologie*, iii. (1861), bl. 11—22. A psychologically probable description of the inner life in Israel, as this was developed by the law (and the prophets), is to be found in *Helon's Wallfahrt nach Jerusalem*, by F. STRAUSS, 2nd ed. (1843).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Is there sufficient ground for considering Mosaism as a fruit of special revelation?—Why is the Law particularly adapted to act as a preparation for the Gospel?—What Evangelical elements are already hidden in Mosaism?—The right and wrong of Typology.

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[14] See Num. xxi. 8, 9; compare John iii. 14, 15.
[15] Ps. li. 16—19; Isa. i. 11, *sqq.*; Micah vi. 6—8.
[16] Ps. cxix. 18.

SECTION LXXXV.—THE REIGN OF THE KINGS.

The reign of the kings in Israel was by no means the end of Theocracy; it was rather the starting-point for a new revelation. From out of the tribe of Judah is chosen the royal house, out of which the Salvation of the world is to come. Henceforth is developed the expectation of a Messiah, whose suffering and glory is the subject of poetic and prophetic description, and whose coming is more ardently desired, as the splendour of royalty and nationality is dimmed. Finally, the fall of that Royalty, and the disappearance of the Theocracy, prepares the shortest way for the Kingdom of God, foretold of old by the Prophets.

1. The *rise* of royalty in Israel, far from being the end of the Theocracy, was rather its modification, and at the same time its development. The sin of the people, which roused the indignation of Samuel,[1] consisted not in the fact that Israel desired a king, but in that it desired a king "like all the nations." In itself the institution of a visible kingdom conflicted so little with God's design, that there was already found in Deuteronomy[2] a so-called royal law, of which it has indeed been asserted, though not established, that it was first given long after the time of Moses. Even in the time of the Judges we meet with aspirations towards a kingdom,[3] which in principle were not reprehensible. Only, the king over this people must not be an autocrat, but rather a theocrat *par excellence*, a viceroy and minister of God, listening to the voice of the prophets, and clearly attached to Mosaism. In Saul too much of this character was missing to expect from a man like him the furtherance of such an idea even for one step. So he is rejected[4] as unsuitable, and Jehovah proves much more severe than Samuel, whilst it soon appears that no king whatever, save the man after God's heart alone, was to be a real blessing to Israel. Even by the contrast between Saul and David, the idea of a true theocratic king, as it was to be fully realised one day in the Messias of the Gospels, was brought to the consciousness of the people.

2. Till the time of Samuel and Saul the expectation of salvation, dating from an earlier age, seems to have slumbered; at least, in the period between Moses and David we do not meet with any noteworthy traces of its existence. It is like the seed, which when cast into the ground disappears for a time from view, till it reappears in an entirely different form of life. With the call of David, however, the tribe of Judah comes a step nearer the high dignity already promised to it in earlier times,[5] and to this prince nothing

[1] 1 Sam. viii. 5, *sqq.*
[2] Deut. xvii. 14—20.
[3] Judges viii. 22; 1 Sam. ii. 10.
[4] 1 Sam. xv. 11.
[5] Gen. xlix. 10.

less is predicted, than an eternal kingdom in his house, crowned with God's greatest blessing. This indeed is the contents of the promise[6] made most solemnly to him by Nathan on behalf of God. Once again to him, as formerly to Adam and Abraham, mention is made of his seed in a collective, not in an individual sense, though the last idea now begins to be seen more clearly than before. This promise finds a beginning of fulfilment in his immediate successor, to whom it directly points, and to whom it is presently repeated under a somewhat altered form.[7] He is greeted with the honourable title of God's son, naturally not in a metaphysical, but in a theocratic sense, because he fulfils the vocation assigned to all Israel,[8] and consequently enjoys the favour of God. But with this firstborn begins a series of kings, more or less illustrious, pointing to, and issuing in, Him who "was to reign over the house of Jacob for ever."[9] In so far as an eternal kingdom was not conceivable, without a matchless person at its head, we see here a ray of light rise before David, of which the lustre dazzles him.[10] The promise of God, given to him, becomes under higher guidance the foundation of his unceasing hope, and henceforth in the Old Testament we can speak not merely of a more or less indefinite expectation of *Salvation*, but of a constantly developing expectation of a *Messiah*.

3. Where in the days of David and Solomon the *splendour* of the kingdom reaches its summit, *David* in particular fixes with his own hand an important link in the history of preparation, which here expressly occupies our attention. Whatever he has done to elevate the religious life in Israel by his Psalms, the preparation for building the temple, the training of sacred music, etc., is here in some degree taken into account. Specially have the so-called Royal Psalms[11] made the dignity of the theocratic kingdom in general stand out with a lustre hitherto unknown.—As a prophet,[12] he sang in the spirit of the coming Messiah, and pointed out in the choicest imagery the glory of His kingdom, as well as the conflict which should precede it.[13] No wonder that a continual echo of such tones is heard in the Scriptures of the New Testament.[14]—Neither may we overlook how he experienced and sung of external and internal conditions, which, viewed in the light of the New Testament, present themselves to us as symbolico-typical declarations of the suffering and glory of the Messiah, without himself knowing or aiming at this. Think for example of Psalms xvi., xxii., xl., lxix., as well as others. Under higher guidance he speaks of his own suffering and expectation, with colouring and tints, which are first fully realised in the *Sufferer* par excellence, who also became the *King* without a parallel. It is as if the spirit of Christ, originally working in the prophets,[15] even centuries before His appearance, thus prophetically an-

[6] 2 Sam. vii. 13—16.
[7] 1 Kings ix. 5; compare 1 Chron. xxii. 10.
[8] Exod. iv. 22.
[9] Luke i. 32.
[10] 2 Sam. vii. 18, *sqq.*
[11] Ps. xx., xxi., lxi., etc.
[12] Acts ii. 30; compare Matt. xxii. 43.
[13] See, specially, Ps. ii., cx.
[14] Acts ii. 34; xiii. 33; Heb. i. 13; and other passages.
[15] 1 Pet. i. 11.

nounces Himself as by the mouth of the sweet singer of Israel's Psalms.—David moreover does not disappear without having given once again a solemn testimony to his highest expectation. His last words[16] express the expectation of a Ruler, not merely over Israel, but over men universally ; a Ruler whose appearing would be as friendly and refreshing to the pious, as fatal to His obstinate enemies.

4. The age of *Solomon*, too, is not lost in the preparation for the fulness of time. His building of the temple did not indeed give any greater stability to the Theocracy, but it added more magnificent splendour to it, and the prayer, made at the dedication of the temple, gives evidence of a large and unlimited expectation.[17] The golden age, which dawned upon Israel under his rule,[18] furnishes the later prophets with materials for depicting the Messianic dispensation. He himself sings of the approaching kingdom of peace in the 72nd Psalm, which with the highest probability must be attributed to Solomon. In his book of Proverbs (ch. viii. 22, *sqq.*) the Divine Wisdom is described by a personal representation in a manner to which the Johannine doctrine of the Logos in after time almost spontaneously attaches itself. And if we may assume that the book of Job was composed by one of the circle of his wise men, then do we find in it in no way the slightest Messianic announcement, as was formerly asserted without any ground, but still a declaration of an individual hope of a life after death,[19] which involuntarily makes one think of the dawn of a brighter day of salvation. Even in the Psalms, whether they belong to this or to a later period, there meet us from time to time similar tones ;[20] while in other passages again, *e.g.*, Ps. xxxii., li., cxxx., the salvation is commended in a true evangelical spirit, which is soon to be given to the world in Christ. The Lord might well declare that mention was made of Him also in the Psalms.[21]

5. If we consider, lastly, the decline and *fall* of royalty in Israel, this period too is far from being without value for the preparation of Christ's coming. Royalty itself indeed is still seen for a number of ages allied to the house of David, threatened it is true with temporary humiliation,[22] but spared from utter destruction. In the midst of the greatest dangers, even in the days of the Babylonian captivity it is preserved, and in Zerubbabel, at the return of the people to its old country, some glare of the old splendour reappears. When afterwards even this last gradually fades away, the expectation of the Messiah, there nursed and cherished, has meanwhile become the heritage of the whole nation. From David's heart it passed into the Psalms, from the Psalms into the hearts of his subjects and their children. If in earlier times men must content themselves with a few cursory hints, they have now fixed views, which even in days of oppression give a courage to hope for better times.[23] Even in the Apocryphal books of the Old Testament we are not without proof that these expectations were in no way abated. Jesus the son of Sirach[24] speaks of God's promise to David ; and the book of Baruch[25] makes mention of a brilliant future for the regenerate Jerusalem, and in the first book of Maccabees[26] repeated refer-

[16] 2 Sam. xxiii. 1—7.
[17] 1 Kings viii. 41, 42.
[18] 1 Kings iv. 25.
[19] Job xix. 23—27.
[20] Ps. xvi. 11 ; xvii. 15 ; lxxiii. 23—28.
[21] Luke xxiv. 44.
[22] 1 Kings xi. 39.
[23] Ps. lxxxix. 35—49.
[24] Ch. xlvii. 13.
[25] Ch. iv. and v.
[26] Ch. iv. 46 ; xiv. 41.

ence is made to the expectation of a true prophet to enlighten the nation; whilst elsewhere[27] the long-continued loss of him is painfully felt and bewailed. No wonder, since the mission of the last of the so-called Minor Prophets was at the same time the last direct revelation of the old Theocracy. We see this gradually disappear after the restoration of the second temple, at the dedication of which no further special token of the glory of the Lord was seen. The Theocracy is resolved into the Hierarchy; while Eastern and Greek thoughts begin to combine with the original Hebraism. But even where no further trace of the former royalty is left, the expectation of Messiah maintains an existence, which is constantly developed more highly. The prospect, not only of an approaching Kingdom of God, but of a King promised by God, dominates the era before the appearing of Christ; men are still groping in the mist, but know that the light will spring up. Indeed, there are not only national expectations, which live on in sacred song, but definite prophetic promises, founded on progressive revelation, which now claim our attention.

Comp. *Christologie des O. V.*, i., bl. 112—211, 494—505; OEHLER'S Art. *Königthum in Israel*, in Herzog, *R. E.*, viii., besides the rich literature concerning David and the different Kings of Israel; and for the later period, A. VAN BEMMELEN, *De Geschied der Makkab. in hare veelzydige belangrykh. voorgesteld* (1837); M. A. WEILL, *Le Judaisme* (2 vols., 1867).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

The different conceptions as to the relation of Theocracy and Kingdom in Israel.—Is there ground for clinging to the existence of Davidic, and indeed of Messianic-Davidic Psalms?—The psychological grounds for the expectation of the Messiah by David and Solomon.—Explanation of the most remarkable passages of the Old Testament here referred to.—In what degree must the fall of the kingdom co-operate for the development of the expectation of the Messiah?—How is it that so few traces of this expectation can be found in the Apocryphal writings of the Old Testament?

SECTION LXXXVI.—PROPHETISM.

Like Mosaism, and Royalty, so Prophetism, more especially, has announced and prepared in Israel the new day of salvation. In this respect the so-called Messianic predictions, before, during, and after the Babylonish exile, had a most beneficial effect. They bring prominently forward, next to the sublimity of the person of the Messiah, the nature of His work, and the splendour of His Kingdom; and thus form a transition from the Particularism

[27] Ps. lxxiv. 9.

of the Old, to the Universalism of the New Covenant, whose significance, properly defined and maintained, cannot be estimated too highly.

1. We have learned to recognise the covenant of God with Abraham, as the foundation of the entire revelation of salvation. Mosaism, Royalty, and Prophetism prepare the way for its appearance in Israel. We have already found in the examination of the first two a trace of the last; now, however, we must look somewhat more closely at this. Here it is naturally not the place for examining Prophetism as a whole, nor need we repeat what has already been called to mind, as well in our treatment of the Biblical Theology of the New Testament (§ xxxv.), as here a little before in that of Apocalyptics (§ xxxii.). We have only to answer the question, how far Prophetism in general, and the Messianic prophecies in particular, may be called a preparation, ordained by God, for the coming of Christ.

2. When we regard from this point of view Prophetism in general, we speak entirely in the spirit of the first witnesses of the Lord.[1] But even already, when considered in itself, the appearance of so numerous a group of Prophets, a solar system of men of God, as Da Costa calls them, may be called a fact in Israel's history of the greatest significance; moreover, it is at once self-evident, that, when compared with the priesthood, they display a character which calls forth the deepest reverence. They stand there as watchers, not merely at the gate, but upon the battlements of the temple; called and disposed not only to maintain, but also to develop Mosaism; intimate friends of God, and interpreters of His counsel and will, whether this relates to the present or to the future. Hence the independent position which we see them always occupy even towards crowned heads: kings are in their estimation viceroys of the Holy One of Israel, whose glory is their own cause. The relation of Samuel to Saul is in this respect typico-symbolic, and the motto of Micaiah the son of Imlah, that of every prophet, "What the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak."[2] Such prophets are seen already in the time of the judges and kings, in the kingdom of Judah; and in that of the ten tribes, as well before as after the Babylonian exile. The properly so-called prophetic era, however, in the history of the Old Testament, may be said to be that which reaches from Samuel till the return from Babylon, and thus embraces a period of nearly seven centuries. Repeatedly do we hear this Prophetism mentioned among the most marked blessings which God had bestowed upon His people,[3] and that not without valid reasons. Indeed, by the labours of these men was restrained the godlessness which threatened with inevitable destruction the national existence and prosperity; and counsel and help were ever again provided by them for the wants of sovereign and people, and the times made ready in Israel, which Moses had desired, and the Prophets themselves foretold.[4]

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[1] See, *e.g.*, Acts iii. 22—25; Rom. xvi. 26; 1 Pet. i. 11.
[2] 1 Kings xxii. 14.
[3] Amos ii. 11; Neh. ix. 30.
[4] Num. xi. 29; Isa. liv. 13; Jer. xxxi. 31—34.

3. Specially as we fix our attention on the *subject-matter* of prophecy, does it appear how Prophetism may well be called alike a salt and a sun for Israel. The *majesty of God's nature* is emphatically proclaimed in the words and writings of these men of God. All the prophets are rigid Monotheists, and only in the monotheistic soul could the plant of the highest religion spring up. Chapters xl. and xliv. of the prophecy of Isaiah furnish an example of the bitter satire with which they lashed idolatry and the worship of images.—Then the *spirituality of God's law* is distinctly asserted. If Israel was but too often inclined to lose sight of the principle, which Mosaism itself proclaimed,[5] and constantly to content itself with a purely formal Legalism, the prophets are continually pointing out the absolute necessity for a really spiritual, inward reverence of God. They are the apostles of Spiritualism in the noblest sense of the word,[6] and thus arouse moral earnestness, and consciousness of sin, but at the same time a need of forgiveness and purification. The entire Ethics of Prophetism is comprised in the language of Samuel (1 Sam. xv. 22), but at the same time it breathes along with its rigid Sinaitic, a gentle Sionitic spirit also. —The *stability of God's covenant* is the guiding star ever again glittering before the eye of the prophets, to which they point the eye of others. Even in the greatest affliction they remember that the house of David is imperishable, and has the promise of a splendid future.[7] Return is predicted after "captivity," restoration after righteous punishment. And in all this they bring a testimony as to the *universality of God's kingdom*, infinitely in advance of the narrow Particularism of their days. If Mosaism builds walls of separation, Prophetism breaks or at least undermines them, as well those between Judah and Israel, as those between Israel and Heathendom.[8] The mission, too, and work of some of them, *e.g.*, Elisha and Jonah, symbolizes this universalistic principle, while a Daniel even deserves no less a name than that of a *world*-prophet. On account of all this, we may safely assert, that the necessary receptiveness for the Gospel would have been absolutely wanting among the contemporaries of the Lord, if Prophetism had not already centuries before raised its powerful voice.

4. Here, however, the so-called *Messianic* prophecies come more specially into consideration. By these we in no way understand mere indefinite poetico-prophetic ideals, about which it afterwards appears that they are fulfilled in Jesus, better than in any one else; but very definite prophetic announcements of the person, work, and kingdom of the Anointed One from David's house, already promised to him by Nathan; while it is a matter of indifference whether these announcements were or were not *exclusively* realised in the days of the New Testament. For it will be easily observed, indeed, that, besides the immediate predictions of the future Bringer of salvation, which can only refer to Him, there exist also a great number of Messianic prophecies, which had already a beginning of fulfilment before the fulness of the times, aye, whose fulfilment is constantly going on, and will go on until the consummation of the ages. We see this, for example, in such prophecies as Isa. xl. 3, *sqq.*; Joel ii. 28—32, and other passages.

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[5] See, *e.g.*, Deut. xxx. 6.
[6] Isa. i. 11—18; lviii. 1, *sqq.*
[7] See, *e.g.*, Isa. vii. 11—16.
[8] Hos. iii. 4, 5; Isa. ii. 2—4.

Where the Scriptures of the New Testament mention a *fulfilment* of the ancient promises, they do not indeed mean to limit that fulfilment to the single fact which is pointed out.[9] Each original fulfilment is rather in its turn a new prophecy, type, and germ of a later one, until all be fulfilled. Upon the broad foundation of the most ancient promise of God rises again and again, as in the building of the pyramids, a closer and more detailed one, till finally, Christ and His kingdom is as it were the culminating point, in which the whole reaches its summit and aim.

5. That there are really Messianic prophecies in this sense, is evident, not merely from scattered testimonies of the New Testament, but still more from the existence of the expectation of a Messiah in Israel itself, even in the darkest times, which without such an objective foundation would be absolutely inexplicable. Hence it is that the Lord and His first witnesses constantly point to these prophecies, as, *e.g.*, Luke xxiv. 44; Acts iii. 24, and other passages. They are distinguished as such, partly by the sublimity of their contents and tone, where these specially from the strictly Monotheistic standpoint, plainly point to something more than human;[10] partly by the fulfilment itself, where this can be as little denied as explained naturally; partly, in fine, from the references in the New Testament, by which the writers kindle a clear and trustworthy light on the mysteries of the Old Testament.

6. In *explaining* the Messianic prophecies we must of course follow the grammatico-historical path, considering them primarily and principally in the light of their own time. It does not, however, thence absolutely follow that it would be superfluous, still less inadmissible, to place ourselves, in the explication of the prophetic words, specially at the Christian standpoint. Rather does the purely philological and historic explication of the prophetic oracles, however indispensable in itself, prove absolutely insufficient to enable us to sound all the depths of this treasure. Prophecy is, from the nature of the case, a hieroglyphical writing, for which a key is indispensable, and as yet we know no better than that which the Lord's own words and those of His Apostles offer. Both stand in their explication of the Old Testament essentially on the same standpoint; and had we no other choice but that of either revising our Hermeneutics, or constantly contradicting the King of Truth, where He explains the Scriptures to us, that choice would not be difficult. The enigmatical character, however, of the fact that so many prophetical words are explained in the New Testament in a manner entirely different to that which the connexion or meaning of the original seems to prescribe,[11] disappears, partly at least, when we observe that the Scripture of the Old Testament is here not so much literally explained as rather regarded in a typico-symbolical light. It is thus quite as unnecessary in this case to recur to a system of accommodation now utterly worn out, as to the dangerous doctrine of a plurality of senses in Holy Scripture. Let it be only confessed, that the Lord and His Apostles saw in the words and facts of the Old Testament—without prejudice to

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[9] Compare *Christol. of the Old Test.* i., p. 59 and following.
[10] See, *e.g.*, Ps. ii. 12; Isa. ix. 6.
[11] See, *e.g.*, Matt. ii. 15; compare Hos. xi. 1.

the original meaning and aim—an announcement and foreshadowing of that which was realised in an infinitely higher degree in the kingdom of God of the New Testament;[12] and in place of marvelling any longer at their use of Scripture, we shall, on the contrary, be always finding additional reference to Christ and His salvation in the utterances of the Prophets.

7. As we examine more closely the *subject-matter* and course of development of the Messianic prophecy, we shall undoubtedly not complain of uniformity and constant repetition. It is rather a rich variety we observe, combined with a very remarkable gradation from a more general to a more detailed view. If we proceed regularly from the oldest to the latest prophets, we find as yet in *Joel* only a single announcement of spiritual salvation,[13] and that one which is not immediately connected with a promised person. (It is only in consequence of an incorrect interpretation that ch. ii. 23 has been understood of the Messiah.) *Amos*,[14] too, merely sees the house of David brought to new honour; while *Hosea*[15] expects the reunion of the separated tribes under a Davidic sceptre. But before the vision of *Micah* and *Isaiah* a clearer light arises, and what already in the Assyrian period was unambiguously expressed, is soon in the Chaldean and Persian epochs enriched with new traits. Especially do passages like Micah v. 1—4; Isa. vii. 14, ix. 1—6, xi. 1—10, the Messianic character of which is in our view incontestable, exhibit a preponderating importance. They put the person or kingdom of the Messiah before us in the light of the brightest glory, the suffering which is to precede, being by Isaiah, as well as by David, but gradually recognised. Only in the last chapters of Isaiah, in connexion with the prospect of the redemption of the nation, is it declared that the "servant of the Lord," the genuine Israel, can but reach the appointed height through a dark abyss. As Prophet He is the light of the Gentiles too, as Priest He offers himself voluntarily and innocent for the sins of others, and thus He first attains the royal supremacy, and "divides the spoil with the strong" (Isa. liii). Though all this may have found a commencement of its fulfilment in the heart of the people of Israel, the sketch is too concrete, that it should be realised in any one less perfect than the suffering Christ. Only once[16] do we find mention here of God's promise to David, though the highest salvation is nowhere looked for, except from a king of the house of David. This continues the case, even in the time of the Babylonian exile,[17] and striking is the certainty with which *Jeremiah*, in contrast to the apparent uncertainty of the Old Testament, predicts the glory of the new Dispensation.[18] *Ezekiel* depicts the coming prince of salvation under the image of a cedar,[19] and shepherd, and sees a stream of living water break out from the new temple.[20] *Daniel* sketches not only the kingdom of God given to the Son of man,[21] as it conquers and replaces the kingdoms of the earth; but he also expects, after the rebuilding of the city and temple, the time when the Messiah shall appear, suffer, and die.[22]

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[12] See, *e.g.*, Matt. xiii. 14, 15; Mark ix. 13; Acts iii. 24.
[13] Joel ii. 28—33.
[14] Amos ix. 11, 12.
[15] Hos. iii. 4, 5.
[16] Isa. lv. 3.
[17] Jer. xxiii. 5, 6; xxxiii. 15, 16.
[18] Jer. xxxi. 30—34.
[19] Ezek. xvii. 22—24; xxxiv. 23.
[20] Ezek. xlvii. 1—12.
[21] Dan. ii. 44; vii. 13, 14.
[22] Dan. ix. 24—37.

Even after the exile, in the book of *Zechariah*,[23] the idea of suffering is not wanting in the image of the Messiah, but at the same time He is depicted as the long-expected, in whom the royal and priestly dignity should henceforth be peacefully combined.[24] Is the second temple also less grand? *Haggai* predicts that its glory shall be greater than that of the first, and even a blessing to the heathen world;[25] and *Malachi* expects in a little time, not only the Angel of God's covenant, but also His Forerunner, the second Elijah.[26] Thus the course of the development of prophecy is limited, on the one hand, by the individuality of the prophets; on the other, by the course of events; but at every turn the person and work of the Messiah presents itself in a suprahuman light before our eyes. "If the idea of the Messiah becomes ever more spiritual and universal, it becomes, too, ever more divine. The mystery of the Incarnation rises resplendent on single points of prophecy, though the Old Testament consciousness of belief is not capable of retaining this ray" (Delitzsch).

8. We cannot be surprised that so important a phenomenon as the Messianic prophecy has elicited manifold *objections;* but as little will it be difficult from the Christian Theistic standpoint, at least to a certain degree, to resolve them.—If the Messianic predictions be called *impossible*, because the true conception of Prophetism leaves no space for the announcement of the relatively fortuitous, we doubt whether in this limitation of the conception in question a proper account has been taken of all the facts. A number of prophetic predictions mention history, relating to things which could not possibly be accounted for by the natural intellect, and which are nevertheless most positively announced years and centuries before. The germs of such things were undoubtedly existing then, but that these should develop themselves just at that time and in that way, which had been foretold with full certainty by the men of God, nobody could of himself have foreseen. But we believe in a God, to whom the future is transparent, and who reveals it, as He is pleased, to His trusted ones.—If we consider such a prediction explicable on merely *natural* principles, we at once overlook the metaphysical character of the prophecy in taking into account the psychological, and confound the condition of the prediction with its source. The higher revelation must have adapted itself to the consciousness of the prophets, but could not possibly spring from that consciousness. Predictions, *e.g.*, of the suffering servant of the Lord in Isaiah, or of the weeks of Daniel, are inconceivable, if the eye of the Seer were not opened by a higher hand; and particularly does the gradual development and internal coherence of prophecy continue incomprehensible, so long as we here cling to the natural causes. "Contre ce fait sans pareil les hommes épuiseront en vain leur science et leur doute; il y a là plus que l'homme, ce n'est pas un fait humain" (Guizot).—That these predictions too were relatively *obscure* follows from the nature of the prophetic contemplation, and was even necessary, if the distinctness of the words should not even prevent their fulfilment.—*Contradictory* with themselves or with one another these prophecies can be called only when we confound the

[23] Zech. xi. 12, 13; xiii. 7.
[24] Zech. vi. 12, 13; ix. 9.
[25] Hag. ii. 6—9.
[26] Mal. iii. 1; iv. 5, 6.

substance with the form, or forget that an equal degree of higher light has not dawned on every eye. We need not assume a strictly compacted system of prophetic expectations; to this one was shown this side, to the other another side of the matter, but together they excite and nourish a hope which in various ways betrays its supranatural origin.—Or should it be objected, that these prospects did at least partially remain unfulfilled? We should thus merely show that we have a tolerably unspiritual conception of the fulfilment of prophecy. "In such things measurement by the ell is misplaced" (Hengstenberg). God's thoughts and ways are seen in reality to stand now and then higher than even the words of the Prophets, but the highest truth can be revealed even to them only in forms suited to their needs and capacity.—Least of all have we the right to call the direct prediction of the Messiah relatively *unimportant*, since in so many other religions also the prospect of a better age is cherished and expressed. So far as this is true, as in Parseeism, the Eddas, etc., the question is how far this expression of a natural presentiment has arisen under the influence of the recollection of an original revelation; while moreover the comparison between these oracles and the prophetic revelations, with all their affinity, renders *evident* in various ways the distinction of human and divine.

9. The *significance* of Prophetism in relation to its assigned aim naturally follows from what has been already said. For the *contemporaries* of the Prophets Prophecy was a source of light, comfort, and power; a rich amends for the want of later blessings.—For the *contemporaries of the Lord* they became the touchstone by which they could recognise the Christ, and also did partly confess Him (John i. 45). If this propædeusis was vain for others, this fact too had been foreseen and foretold;[27] and a means may be suitably chosen, even though for many, through their own fault, it does not attain its object.—For *the Lord Himself* the Prophetic Scriptures became the mirror in which He afterwards recognised Himself; his internal Messias-consciousness was aroused by this chorus of voices.—Finally, *for the Christian Church*, Prophetism remains the great age-enduring proof that God Himself has given, developed, and prepared for the revelation of salvation, and the positive pledge that His plan of salvation will also in the end be perfectly realised. We cannot therefore give too serious heed to this prophetic word,[28] nor can the express study of it be urgently enough recommended to the student of the science of faith. Then only, however, will that study become important and fruitful when we have inwardly broken away from Naturalism.

Comp. J. J. VAN OOSTERZEE, *Chr. Dog.* (Eng. trans.), p. 140, and the literature there quoted; *Christologie des O. T.* (1855). i., p. 212, *sqq.*; AUBERLEN, *a. a. O.*, i. (1869), p. 70; H. SCHULTZ, *a. a. O.* (1866), ii., p. 1, *sqq.*; J. J. P. VALETON, *De Profetie in Israel*, in the *Protest. Bijd.*, i. (1870), p. 351, *sqq.* Upon the latter chapters of Isaiah, A. RUTGERS (1866); and upon the authenticity of Daniel, the Apologetes mentioned by O. ZOECKLER, in his commentary on that book in LANGE'S *Bibelwerk*, p. 20, *sqq.*; to which add PUSEY, on *Daniel* (1864). On the whole subject of this section, W. NEUMANN, *Geschichte der Messian. Weissagung im A. T.* (1865).

[27] Isa. liii. 1.

[28] Luke xvi. 31; 2 Pet. i. 19.

Points for Inquiry.

How far is Prophetism in Israel to be regarded as a universally human, and how far as an entirely unique, phenomenon?—Upon what religious questions does Prophecy actually throw new light? and what questions are not answered by it?—Is there ground for really conceiving of definite predictions respecting the historic person of the Lord?—Treatment and maintenance of the most important Messianic prophecies.—How is it that this portion of the Divine προπαίδευσις has continued without fruit for so many, and is so little valued by others?

SECTION LXXXVII.—THE FORERUNNER.

In the appearing and work of John the Baptist is the historical preparation for the revelation of Christ in Israel completed, and the ever continuing preparation for His revelation in the world and in the heart symbolised.

1. As the Prophetism of the Old Testament found its glorious starting-point in Moses, so it is nobly crowned in John the Baptist. Jesus Himself called him the greatest of the prophets,[1] and in all succeeding ages Christendom has spoken of his appearing and work in almost the same breath with that of the King of the Kingdom of God. That it did so rightly, is clear from the voice of history, which raises beyond all doubt the *existence* of a direct relation between him and the Lord. That John actually lived, preached, baptized, and was slain at Herod's command, is also told by Josephus,[2] though he, for reasons easy of explanation, does not speak of the connexion of his work with that of Jesus and His disciples. But already in the Acts of the Apostles[3] do we find repeated evidence of this connexion; while the first three Gospels, as well as the fourth, express themselves in this respect most decidedly, and the King of the Kingdom Himself repeatedly pointed to John as His forerunner. Only unbridled hypercriticism can contradict a fact which may be called one of the best established in the Gospel history, or find occasion from the single narrative of Matt. xi. 2, *sqq.*, for regarding with a glance of suspicion whatever is told as to John's earlier relation to Jesus. Even the earliest relation of John's disciples to those of Jesus proves that the masters of both were in no way strangers to one another.

2. The *nature* and *extent* of the relation between John and Jesus, though reciprocal, was still from another side so extraordinary that it cannot be compared with any other, and can only be explained from the fact, that to John was given by God the definite duty of preparing as powerfully as possible, by his whole appearance and work, for that of Christ.—To this end his *birth* was serviceable, with all its extraordinary circumstances, which at the very outset fix attention upon him, and must make him, as

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[1] Luke vii. 28. [2] A. J., xviii. 5, 2. [3] Acts xiii. 25; xviii. 25.

the son of such aged parents, announced by an angel, in himself the subject of great expectations.—His unexpected *appearance*, after long-continued solitude in the wilderness, and after so long a silence of the voice of prophecy, could not fail to make the deepest impression on all "who were waiting for salvation."—His *manner of life*, though not absolutely uncommon, must soon increase this impression. It made men think of Elijah, whose return had been foretold by Malachi,[4] and symbolised in a striking manner all the seriousness of the Old Dispensation, while at the same time it sounded a sharp note of denunciation against luxury and earthliness.—Specially was his *preaching*, like the person of the preacher himself, the voice of one calling,[5] such as Isaiah had spoken of. It pointed not merely generally to the Kingdom of God and its holy demands, but to its King, and to His appearance as Redeemer and Judge. This latter John did in a more general way even before the revelation at the Jordan, which became the great turning-point even in his inner life.[6] But after that he points directly to Jesus as the Messiah, exalted far above him in dignity, because He already existed before him, and is "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin" of the lost world. It is as if we perceive in this testimony an echo of Isaiah, and at the same time a prelude of St. Paul,—but, above all, the animated expression of the first impression made upon the greatest of the prophets by the sight of the Christ Himself. What wonder that such preaching opened countless hearts for that of the Gospel of the Kingdom by Jesus and the Apostles!—This was partly explained, partly established, by the *baptism* of John. By making this symbolical action imperative on all who desired the blessings of the Kingdom of God, he declared, in other words, the whole nation unclean, but he also opened to the most unclean the prospect of forgiveness through sincere repentance. It was distinguished from all previous religious purifications by its relation to the coming Messiah, and from the later Christian baptism, by the fact that as yet it only served as a solemn setting apart for, not an immediate reception into, the Kingdom of God. The baptism of Jesus' disciples, as well as that of Jesus Himself, at the commencement of His public life,[7] must thus be regarded as a temporary continuation of the Johannine baptism of preparation.—Even the *absence of wonders and signs* at his preaching and baptism,[8] which may seem strange to superficial observers, was quite in accordance with the proper task of his life. In this also is shown his inferiority to the Prophet, mighty both in word and deed, and the miracles of the Lord quickly make more impression on the people.—Not slight moreover is the *influence* exercised by his words and work, even after his death. Here he calls out sympathy, there disgust, but no one does he leave unmoved and cool.[9] Even the most powerful dare not in the presence of the people deny his Divine mission,[10] and Herod trembles at his voice of rebuke.[11] He leads not a few to Christ, and even in after years his school is a transition to the Church of the Lord;[12] while they, on the contrary, who con-

[4] Mal. iv. 5.
[5] Isa. xl. 3.
[6] Matt. iii. 16, 17.
[7] John iii. 22; iv. 2.
[8] John x. 41.
[9] Luke vii. 29, 30.
[10] Matt. xxi. 26.
[11] Mark vi. 20.
[12] Acts xix. 1—6.

tinued to call themselves obstinately after him, showed in this very way that they had not comprehended his mission.—In addition to all this comes, lastly, a *personality* and a *character*, whereby that influence is perfectly explained, but which is always too sublime for any eulogy. We find the most beautiful characteristics of the greatest prophets united in him, and accompanied by a humility which makes him withdraw unconditionally and voluntarily into the shade before the King of the Kingdom.

Vainly do men seek to diminish the importance of the appearing and work of John, by pointing to the "*strange message*" which he sent from his prison to Jesus.[13] It was not the person, but the mode of the Lord's work which offered him the material for a conflict or doubt, which can be thoroughly explained, but can in no case be turned into a weapon against the Baptist himself. Jesus Himself has conferred upon him the crown of honour before the eyes of all, and has repeatedly linked His own work and honour with that of John.[14]—To the very end the forerunner remained consistent, and even his *premature death* availed finally to help on the great task of his life. Where the "burning and shining light" was extinguished, must the eye be directed more undividedly to the Sun of the world.

3. The great *significance*, too, of this part of the history of preparation of Christ's coming is of itself evident. That significance is on the one side *historico-apologetic*. Must the greatest of the prophets appear as the forerunner of Jesus of Nazareth, then can Jesus Himself be nothing less than the promised King of God's Kingdom. The testimony of a man like John not only honours him, but the Lord, and every comparison of the two makes us feel again the superiority of Jesus over John. The modern Naturalism is not even able properly to estimate a man like John, but faith acknowledges in his work the last link of a chain whose beginning is lost in the night of centuries.—But that appearance at the same time exhibits a *typico-symbolic* character. Even yet, as then, must the preacher of repentance go before the Prince of Peace, and the Law precede the Gospel. Only where John has done his work in the heart, can the Christ come with His salutation of peace.

Comp. OOSTERZEE, *Leven van Jezus*, i., bl. 512; *Biblical Theology of the New Test.* (Eng. trans.), § 7, with the literature mentioned there, to which must be added OOSTERZEE, *Christol. d. O. V.*, bl. 522—532; the Essay of W. SCHMIDT, *Die Christologie Joh. der Täufers*, in the *Jahrbuch für deutsche Theol.* (1869), iv., p. 627.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Meaning and force of Luke vii. 29.—Why does Fl. Josephus speak so little and so uncertainly respecting John?—Did John stand at the particularistic or the universalistic standpoint?—Can we observe in his testimonies concerning Christ progress and advancement?—In what relation does he stand to the Mosaism, Prophetism, and Judaism of his time?—Has the absence of all miracles in the history of his public life any apologetic value?—Signification and evidential force of Matt. xi. 2, 3.—The last testimony of John concerning Jesus (John iii. 27—36).—Why, in Mark i. 1, *sqq.*, is the beginning of the Gospel announced in the same breath with the preaching of John?

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[13] Luke vii. 19. [14] Matt. xxi. 24; John v. 33—36.

SECTION LXXXVIII.—HEATHENDOM.

The preparation of the heathen world for the coming of the promised Redeemer must not be passed over nor undervalued; neither must it be placed on an equality with that of the people of Israel. Brought about partly by Israel itself, partly in other ways, it shows in its results the most unmistakable signs that God[1] was a God, not of the Jew only, but also of the Gentile.

1. That which we have as yet discovered respecting the preparation for the highest Revelation, related exclusively to Israel. But St. Paul has already observed that God had not left Himself without witness to the Heathen,[2] and the question, what higher Wisdom has done to open the way for the light of the world, even in the night of Heathendom, merits a proper answer, not merely for the sake of completeness, but still more on account of its great importance. For we must not suffer ourselves to be charged with the onesidedness of those who entirely pass by or despise this side of the matter, nor with that of those who will not acknowledge the real distinction between the Jewish and the Heathen world. If the first fell in too much with the view of the earlier Orthodoxy, of the other we necessarily run a risk from the standpoint of the modern Naturalism. The more recent school of belief acknowledges and values, on the one hand, the *fact* that God has prepared the heathen as well as the Jewish world for the fulness of the time; but, on the other, observes very closely the *distinction* between that which we find here in the sacred and in the profane domain.

2. The fact that Heathendom, too, was carefully prepared for revelation, must be recognised as soon as we survey that world, without any relation whatever to the people of Israel. To it, too, was given God's general revelation in Nature, History and Conscience.[3] "The Apostle conceives of the Revelation as that consonant, in itself dumb, which can only be expressed in connection with the vowel, added to it from without" (Lange).—So the appearance and labours of distinguished men, such as Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Seneca, and others, tended unmistakably to bring out not merely moral and religious civilisation, but specially to call out a desire for a light from above, which no philosopher or priest could kindle.—Lastly, even God's righteous leaving of the heathen world to error and sin, which it had itself voluntarily chosen,[4] was itself to become the means in God's hands to bring about by the very extremity of the misery, a desire for redemption which could find satisfaction only in the Gospel.—That neither of these

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[1] Rom. iii. 29.
[2] Acts xiv. 17.
[3] Rom. i. 19, 20; ii, 14, 15; Acts xiv. 17.
[4] Rom. i. 28.

objects has in any way failed, is seen among other things, from the unconscious and conscious aspirations after Christianity, which we discover in such various forms in the centre of Heathendom. Thus, *e.g.*, think of the traces of an expectation of salvation in the religions of the East; of the remarkable utterances of Plato on this point, *e.g.*, the conclusion of the second book of the *Alcibiades* (cf. *De Republicâ* ii.), of the fable of Prometheus, of the expectations of Virgil, *e.g.* in his fourth Eclogue, (which were already considered by the Fathers as a kind of Messianic prediction),[5] and many others.

3. Especially by Israel itself has God prepared the heathen world for the New Testament day of salvation. The experiences and journeyings of the people of Israel made the majesty of their God known far beyond the land of promise.[6] The exile to Babylon, in particular, was one of the greatest revelations of the name of Jehovah to the previously idolatrous nations.[7] The Israelites, indeed, however much they were set apart from other nations, were in no way separated from them, and were often visited by them.[8]—Not less important in this respect is the work of some of the prophets in foreign countries, as Elijah, Elisha,[9] Jonah, Daniel, and the behaviour of Jeremiah at the capture of Jerusalem, and the impression made by it.[10] Remember also the pious command for the rebuilding of the temple given by Cyrus, after the Babylonish captivity, perhaps caused by the utterance of God in Isa. xliv. 28, with which he had been made acquainted; as well as the reverence paid to Jehovah by Alexander the Great on his entrance into Jerusalem, when the high priest pointed him to the predictions he saw fulfilled in his triumphs;[11] and also the numerous other proofs of the increasing estimation enjoyed by the Jewish people far beyond its immediate neighbours.—Above all had Israel an educational effect on the heathen world, through its Holy Scriptures in their Greek translation, scattered like a seed of life over its far extended fields. In conjunction with this, of very great significance also was the *Jewish Dispersion* in its different branches—the Babylonian, the Egyptian, the Syrian in Asia Minor, and the Græco-Roman. According to Philo, there were in Egypt alone a million Jews, and the "victoribus victi leges dederunt" of Seneca soon shows itself as something infinitely beyond a mere phrase. The influence also of the two kinds of proselytes, those of the gate, and those of righteousness, must by no means be estimated at a low value. It is not only the Greek philosophy, but also Israel itself especially, which has been for Heathendom in various ways for centuries "a schoolmaster to Christ."

4. Still, the preparation of the two for the Revelation of salvation cannot be unconditionally placed in one line. Less accurately, indeed, do we denote the *difference* when we describe that of Israel as positive, and that of Heathendom as negative; since all that has been said concerning the

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[5] See, *e.g.*, August., *De Civ. Dei* x., 27, *Ep.* 155.
[6] Exod. xv. 6; Josh. ii. 10; ix. 24.
[7] See the Book of Daniel.
[8] 1 Kings viii. 41, 42; x. 9.
[9] 1 Kings xvii.; 2 Kings v.
[10] Jer. xxxviii. 7—9; comp. xxxix. 15—18.
[11] Joseph. A. J. xi. 8.

latter certainly does not exhibit a merely *negative* character. But, in contrast with the direct preparation of the elect people, we may here safely speak of a more *indirect* preparation. Here the dimness is only enlightened by brilliant stars; in Israel it is besides brightened by a friendly moonlight, and the dawn is finally seen only in the region of the East. Greece, even in its golden age, is merely the land of culture; Israel, the people of *cultus* (worship): and if the presentiment of a better era is roused even in the heathen world, salvation itself and its promise, always will belong in their origin to the Jews.[12]—Rather than speak of an education of heathendom (in so far at least as by this we understand only a development of the good already potentially present), we would here treat of a preparing grace of God (*gratia præveniens*), which, by its own ways, prepared even in this wilderness, a way for the kingdom of God.—The deepest ground for the receptivity of the heathen world, thus aroused, lay undoubtedly in the operation of the Logos before His Incarnation,[13] which did not at all limit itself exclusively to Israel.[14]—Far indeed from finding in the slowness and hiddenness of this Divine preparation anything suspicious, these very things furnish to us a renewed proof of the Divine wisdom, and at the same time of the high value of the kingdom of God. In the domain of spirit, too, the highest of all ripens last and most slowly.

5. The great *importance* of this side of the matter is in itself evident, even without extended demonstration.—Much of the relatively beautiful and true in the old heathen world is only adequately explained in this way.—The remarkable agreement between so many heathen and Christian predictions is satisfactorily elucidated by this means.—An otherwise obscure guiding of Providence, in the temporary selection of a single nation, is thus set free from all appearance of arbitrariness and severity.—Lastly, the rapid spread of the youthful kingdom of God into the heart of the heathen world ceases to be a mystery, when we bring the thus finished history of preparation into connection with the "fulness of the time."

Comp. OOSTERZEE, *Christology*, iii., pp. 103—113; P. HOFSTEDE DE GROOT, *Opvoed. d. Menschd.*, ii. (1847), and his *God's openb. van Israel, de bron der Gr. Wijsbegeerde*, in W. in L. (1869), p. 563, *sqq.*; (1870), p. 225, *sqq.*; L. G. PAREAU, W. in L. (1859), i. On the presentiment of the Christian perfection, and the desire for it in the heathen world, LUTHARDT, *Apologet. Vorträge*, i., p. 159, *sqq.*; ACKERMANN, *Das Christliche in Plato* (1835), with the motto, θεῖος μὲν Πλάτων, θεὸς δὲ Χριστός; LUEBKER, *Propyleen zu einer Theologie des klass. Alterthums, in Stud. u. Krit.* (1861), iii.; F. PIPER, *Virgilius der Theolog und Prophet des Heidenthums in der Kirche, Ev. Kal.* (1862), p. 17, *sqq.*

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

How is it that in the Christian Dogmatics of earlier times the preparation in heathendom for the appearing of Christ was so much overlooked?—May we here from any theological standpoint speak of a preparation willed and worked by God?—How far can we here rightly speak of education?—What does the New Testament teach us on this matter?—How was it viewed and developed in the Alexandrine School?—The doctrine of Zwingle concerning the salvation of pious heathen.—What progress do we observe in the domain of this investigation in the later Dogmatics, as compared with that of earlier days?—Closer analysis and estimation of the expectation of salvation in the old heathen world.—Does the doctrine of the Logos shed any light here?—The importance of the Dispersion.—Heathendom on the eve of the day of the New Testament.

[12] John iv. 22. [13] John i. 4. [14] Compare § c.

SECTION LXXXIX.—RESULT.—THE FULNESS OF THE TIME.

Not only does the Jewish, but also the heathen world, at the beginning of the Christian era, furnish us with evidence of their need of, their capacity for, and their desire after, the coming of the kingdom of God; so that the words of the Apostle[1] concerning the fulness of the time, in which God sent His Son, are strikingly justified. The observation of this phenomenon, and the contemplation, thus completed, of the whole preparation for the coming of the Redeemer, has not merely an historical, but also an apologetic and dogmatic significance.

1. The long history of preparation, which we have surveyed, justifies the claim by which the Lord at the beginning of His public life could say, "the time is fulfilled;"[2] and it is also with perfect justice declared in the Netherlands Confession (Art. xviii.), that God has sent His Son "at a time decreed by Himself." That the time appointed by God must be the most fit, is evident; but this appears still more clearly here, whether we look at the condition of the Jewish, or at that of the heathen world. We can, of course, here only just touch upon much which deserves further development, but which has also been treated of more than once.

2. *Heathendom* exhibits the deepest *need* of a further revelation, whether we glance at the condition of religion, philosophy, or morality. Religion had outlived itself, and unbelief begun to mock at that which superstition had reverenced most deeply. The silence of the oracles which had formerly spoken, is in this respect symbolical; and the mysterious voice, said to have been heard declaring that great Pan was dead, was the expression of a touching truth.—Philosophy had long since declined from its former height, and a scepticism, which constantly enlarged its bounds, gradually became the sole wisdom. The hopelessness of obtaining any objective certainty could do nought but help on a theoretical and practical Epicureanism; and along with the power of truth, that of morality seemed also to be irrecoverably lost. "*Innocentia non rara, sed nulla*," was the declaration of Seneca.—Who has ever read Juvenal without shuddering at the scenes which are there depicted? We see sensuality and cruelty united in the most horrible manner, so as to confirm the words of the Apostle;[3] both constantly succeeded by the most intolerable satiety of life, the *communis vitæ fastidium* of Seneca. Consider, *e.g.*, the condition of the poor, the slaves, women; the depth to which marriage had sunk, etc.—Yet the *capacity* for a higher happiness has not yet been destroyed, but even excited to a greater degree than before; the ground is ready for the seed.

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[1] Gal. iv. 4. [2] Mark i. 15. [3] Eph. v. 12.

The subjection of a great part of the known world to Rome had overthrown walls of separation centuries old; the general acquaintance with the Greek tongue could not but be very serviceable to the rapid study and spread of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; a toleration, hitherto unknown, opened the heathen world to the preaching of a new religious system; and civilisation, too, while it was a hindrance to many, might be to others a guide to Christianity. And so the fact that the Gospel, according to the Acts of the Apostles, was often received by the heathen with much more eagerness than by the Jews, becomes explicable.—Nor was this any wonder, when the desire for some change for the better was so very widely spread. This is seen, *e.g.*, in the expectation with which so many a glance was turned towards the East;[4] in the enthusiasm with which Augustus was welcomed by Virgil, Horace, and so many others, as the saviour of mankind; in the significant narrative of the Eastern Magi in St. Matthew's Gospel; so that at this period we might, with a certain degree of justice, speak of a crypto-Christianism in the heathen world.

3. This same desire is seen with much greater force among the *Jews*. The *yearning* has become so great, that "the waiting for the consolation of Israel" was the most striking characteristic of piety about the time of the birth of Jesus. Simeon and Anna are types of this expectation; and in the Book of Enoch, and the fourth Book of Ezra too, the same expectation is visible, leading even to the appearance of all kinds of false Messiahs. So more than ever before was found a *capacity* for receiving the long-promised One. Idolatry had dwindled away; religious knowledge was developed more than in earlier times; more earnestness had been called out under the influence of various circumstances, and the middle wall of partition between Israel and Heathendom had been undermined. From various sides, too, ideas had sprung up, to which the Gospel could ally itself, and everywhere were devout men,[5] ready and fit to receive the new light.—The real *want* of new life was everywhere acknowledged by the best men. The social misery, the religious divisions, the influence of various sects, the depraved condition of the people, combined with the protracted silence of the prophetic voices so long expected in vain; all these things co-operated in bringing this want more clearly to the consciousness of many; and we are not astonished to hear it expressed by some in a most striking manner.[6]

4. But even where this is readily assented to, the *objection* may be raised, whether the entire history of the preparation, which we have now surveyed, along with all the consequences which result from it, has not rather an historical than a dogmatical significance? In general, we may reply to this objection, that such a contrast between historical and religious truth is not only incorrect and arbitrary, but even in principle unchristian.[7] But it can, besides, easily be shown that what has been said is in direct connexion both with the subject-matter and the basis of Christian faith, and confirms most strikingly more than one primary truth of our religion. We may even point out, as a real mark of progress in the domain of Christian

[4] Tac. Ann. v. 13.
[5] Acts ii. 5.
[6] See, *e.g.*, Luke i. 68—79; compare Matt. ix. 35—38.
[7] Compare § xxxii. iii. 1.

Dogmatics, that modern Supranaturalism has here,—quite as much as in the domain of Soteriology, with regard to the doctrine of *gratia præveniens*,—given in the domain of Christology a fit and honourable place to the doctrine of the historical preparation for the coming of Christ; whilst, in earlier times at least, from the standpoint of Ecclesiastical Dogmatics, this was scarcely observed.

In the first place we feel, at the end of our road, *the absolute necessity of an extraordinary revelation*.[8] Nothing of that which we have seen fitted for the preparation for this revelation, would of itself have been sufficient to take its place, and the entire condition of the world at the close of this period is such, that the appearance of a new era of salvation might be called, not merely desirable, but absolutely indispensable.—*Secondly*, what has been observed, convinces us of the *impossibility* of explaining the establishment of the kingdom of God among the Jews and the Heathen in a merely natural way. Everywhere, it is true, we see the need of, the longing after, and the capacity for, the salvation, which should come from above, but nowhere power sufficient to produce from itself the highest and the best.—*Thirdly*, the *greatness of Christ* is now more clearly seen by us, who appears to be, indeed, the centre of the world's history, the turning-point between the older and later era, the pivot, in a word, on which the entire plan of God moves.[9] Such a long and brilliant dawn was only possible when the Sun of the spiritual world, and not merely a star of the first magnitude, was about to rise.—But then there is here, *fourthly*, revealed the *majesty of God*, whose wisdom has conducted everything carefully towards this centre, whose truth has fulfilled His promises, now centuries old, whose grace has prepared and bestowed in His Son nothing less than an "unspeakable gift." The whole history of this preparation may be called a continued apology for the Christian idea of God.—And when in these days, more than ever, we see Christianity undermined and menaced, then, *lastly*, is our belief in the *indestructibility of the kingdom of God* strengthened by the thought, that what has been so carefully prepared for cannot possibly be intended to fade away into the clouds, but, on the contrary, must triumph over the most obstinate resistance, and entirely renew the face of the moral world, as it has once, coming to life at a fitting time, conquered the whole Jewish and Heathen world of antiquity.

Impressed with this consciousness, we prepare to consider more closely, and with heightened reverence, the *PERSON of the Redeemer Himself*.

Comp. OOSTERZEE, *Leven van Jezus* (2nd ed., 1863), i., bl. 265, *sqq.*; also, *The Biblical Theol. of N. T.* (Eng. trans.), § 6, with the literature there referred to, to which must be added the Essay of HOLTZMANN, *Die Messias-idee zur Zeit Jesu*, in the *Jahrb. für deutsche Theol.* (1867), iii.; TH. KEIM, *Geschichte Jesu von Nazara* (1867), i., pp. 173—206; A. HAUSRATH, *Neutestamentl. Zeitgeschichte*, i., *Die Zeit Jesu* (1868).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

The meaning of Gal. iv. 4, compared with Mark i. 15.—Was not an earlier appearance of Christianity desirable, and even necessary?—The relation of the principal Greek schools of philosophy and Jewish religious sects to the Gospel of the kingdom.—The fulness of the time in connexion with prophecy, and with the narrative of its first promulgation.—The Christo-centric character of the history of the world and of Christian Apologetics.—Transition to the succeeding division.

[8] Section xxx.

[9] Ephes. i. 10.

SECOND DIVISION.

THE PERSON OF THE REDEEMER.

SECTION XC.—PLACE OCCUPIED BY THIS SUBJECT, SOURCE OF OUR KNOWLEDGE IN REGARD THERETO, AND REQUIREMENTS FOR ITS EXAMINATION.

THE personality of Him who in the fulness of time arose as the promised Redeemer, occupies in the history of the world and of Religion—and, consequently, also in Christian Dogmatics—a unique and indisputable place. We know this personality from a series of testimonies, diverse in value, but in combination sufficient to lead us to a knowledge of the manifestation of the Christ, which, although incomplete, is yet clear, well-grounded, and fruitful. In its historic-dogmatic contemplation, absolute neutrality is impossible, but one-sidedness is prejudicial, and many-sidedness a duty; although the difference between Dogmatics and Biography must here by no means be overlooked.

1. When we approach the contemplation of the *person* of the Lord, its wholly unique *place* first of all attracts our attention. To start with, the fact cannot be overlooked that for ages past the whole Christian world has divided the history of our race into two unequal parts, between which the appearing of Christ is the turning-point. Even unbelief must reconcile itself to accept a new era as beginning with His birth, and profane Historiography—no less than sacred—has recognised the indisputable claim of the *Æra Christiana*. No wonder, since religion to so great an extent dominates the life of nations, and the history of religion can point to no other manifestation so sublime and so remarkable as this. Nowhere is the personality of its Founder so inseparably connected with the doctrine and precepts of the religion as here. When Mahomet has uttered his main dogma, his personality vanishes; and whatever one's opinion may be about his history, one can still belong to his community. But from a Christian standpoint, on the contrary, not the religion or moral teaching of Jesus, but belief in Christ, is the main thing; and we possess no higher knowledge of God than that which is the fruit of God's historic manifestation in Him. For this reason, Christology is in Christian Dogmatics, not merely one among many important articles of doctrine; but the central point, the axis, around which all turns, especially at the present time (§ vii.). If in earlier times

the dogma of the inspiration and authority of Holy Scripture was frequently regarded as the most important central-dogma, now the whole dogmatic-apologetic investigation more and more gathers around the Person of the Lord, as the centre of the Revelation of God. Even from the exaggeration or the misapplication of this principle, less danger is to be apprehended than from its absolute non-recognition, which in earlier and later times expressed itself in the utterance of Rationalism, that "had the world never heard of the person of Christ, but only of His doctrine, it would have been the happier for it." Just as well might one wish to have seen only the sun's rays, but never his disc. What place the person of Christ must therefore occupy—especially in the preaching of the Gospel—cannot here be further entered upon. Enough that for the Homilete also, no other fundamental law applies than for the Dogmatist.[1]

2. The *sources* from which we learn to know the Lord, are of course wholly historic in their nature, and moreover of different degrees of value. We may divide them into less or more direct sources; the latter again into those of the first and of the second rank. To the former belong the *Heathen*, *Jewish*, and *Mahomedan* testimonies concerning the appearing, the doctrine, the acts and the outward experiences of Jesus on earth. If the last-named sources are of less importance, because they afford us only a dubious echo of Christian tradition; among the Jewish sources, the passage of Josephus, *Antiq.* xviii. § 3. 3—although probably interpolated—is especially of great importance; while from the Heathen, again, particularly those of Tacitus, *Annal.* xv. 44; Suetonius, *Claud.* c. 25; and Lucian, *De Morte Peregr.* c. 11—13, deserve careful attention.

Direct sources of the *second* order are the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse, and the earliest Christian literature of the post-apostolic age; while even in the so-called Apocryphal Gospels there are by no means wanting traces of well-known, though falsified truth. The *first* rank we continue to ascribe to the four canonical Gospels, in the examination of which the different, though by no means contradictory, character of the Synoptical and the Johannine accounts must be duly recognised.[2] Their testimony is supported by that of the history of the Christian Church, without, however, its being possible to place this last, as a source of our knowledge of the manifestation of Christ, upon a level with the sacred documents themselves. The same may be said of the Christian consciousness (§ x.), which certainly most strikingly confirms the

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[1] Comp. A. SCHWEITZER, *Ueber die Dignität des Religionsstifters*, in the *Stud. und Kritik.* (1834), iii. and iv.

[2] As far as concerns the genuineness of the Fourth Gospel, heretofore supposed, compare our *Lectures* already referred to, under the title of *The Gospel of John* [Eng. trans.]. The further history of this controversy has only given us occasion to make our own the words of W. F. GESS, in his interesting work, *Christi Person und Werk nach Christi Selbstzeugniss, u. s. w.*, i. (1870), p. 8: "For my part, renewed application to the study of the Gospels has only deepened the conviction that it is not criticism and intellectual freedom, but prejudice, which refuses to accept the Fourth Gospel as a pure source of historical knowledge; and that setting it aside amounts to rendering impossible the understanding of the greatest subject on which history has ever written." On the Synoptical Gospels, as sources for the life of Jesus, compare, *inter alios*, R. T. GRAU, *Entwicklungsgeschichte des N. T.-lichen Schriftthums*, i. (1871).

testimony of the Gospels, but itself does not teach anything new with respect to the Lord, and moreover needs ever again to find its correcting rule in the word of Scripture, which here alone is sufficiently valid and trustworthy. How little the merely human consciousness, regarded wholly in itself, has here a right to speak with decisive authority, as on a level with Scripture, may be inferred, *e.g.*, from the hint of Jesus Himself, in John iii. 12.

3. The only question now remaining is what we are to *require* in an investigation in itself so highly important. The demand for absolute impartiality and *neutrality* (*Voraussetzungslosigkeit*),[3] which was formerly not seldom here insisted on with great emphasis, has been withdrawn by its own advocate,[4] and is morever rejected as absolutely impossible, alike by the Christian conscience and by every-day experience. No one stands in an absolutely neutral relation towards the manifestation of Christ; least of all ought this to be the case with the Theologian who will scientifically explain and justify his belief in Christ. Only he must take care that no dogmatic prejudice obscure the clearness and accuracy of his observation, and must remain prepared to make a due acquaintance with every result of a criticism as far as possible unprejudiced, while he is constantly on his guard against all *onesidedness*. This latter is found where stress is laid on the Divine in the Lord at the expense of the human, or the converse; or where, for instance, there is recognised in Him the teacher and the exemplar, but not the one who makes expiation for sin, and the personal Head of the Church; or again, where the latter is exclusively acknowledged, while the former is not recognised. The history of Christian philosophic thinking abounds with proofs, which rival each other in their confirmation of the unjustifiable and destructive character of such onesidedness.—How necessary and salutary, on the other hand, a well-directed effort after *many-sidedness* of conception may here be regarded, is evident even from the nature of the case, and not less from numerous examples. The greater the number of sides from which we contemplate the person of the Lord, the more may we hope to learn to know Him aright, and to penetrate as it were within the veil into the innermost sanctuary. Thus not simply in Himself, or in His relation to the Father, but also in relation to His friends and His foes, to His Church and to the world, to the past and to the future, must He here be contemplated, with an eye enlightened by faith and rendered keen by love. One must thus not think he knows Christ so long as he has only attentively observed Him from one side; but just as little that any one can learn duly to know each side separately, so long as he has no eye or heart for the great and glorious whole. On the contrary, here also again every part must be distinguished, and as it were inwardly mastered from the point of view of the whole, contemplated by the eye of the spirit. While unbelief as much as possible *isolates* all things, and thus renders for itself the just appreciation of the object of its atomistic criticism absolutely impossible, the science of faith must especially find its strength in the due *combination* of what it has first

[3] Freedom from presuppositions.
[4] See STRAUSS. *Leben Jesu, f. d. deutsche Volk* (1864), p. xiii.

distinguished; and must above all take care that it learns to understand the person of the Lord from His own word, rightly explained and maintained. The fruit of such an examination will not indeed be a complete knowledge,[5] but yet an insight into the truth, sufficiently clear and well-grounded for us to build further thereupon; and above all, rich in fruit for our own development, for the cause of the Kingdom of God, and the glorifying of God by the right appreciation of His unspeakable gift in Christ.

4. Here, nevertheless, it is of importance not to overlook the difference between the task of the Biographer of the Lord in the proper sense of the term, and that of the Dogmatist. There was a time when it was thought necessary to include in a system of Dogmatics a review of the life of the Lord, concise indeed, but yet as complete and accurate as possible; but, even if this were not in itself impossible, the present position of the criticism of the Gospel narrative would render it unadvisable and impossible. In Dogmatics only those sides of the Lord's personality and those facts of His history ought to come under review, which stand in direct connection with Soteriology, and that which belongs to it. The history of the birth and resurrection of Christ has for this reason far greater importance for Dogmatics than, *e.g.*, the particulars concerning His baptism or the temptation in the wilderness. A number of questions, for Biography of preponderating interest, are, on the contrary, for the Dogmatic investigation, if of any, at least only of a very subordinate degree of importance. The latter has reached its limits in this domain when it has given an answer to the question, "*Who* was Jesus?"—a question with which another, "*What* was and is He, and what is He doing?" may on satisfactory grounds be associated. The question as to the historic reality of Christ's appearing is thus naturally first in order.

Compare our *Leven van Jezus* (2nd ed.), pt. i., §§ vi.—xvi., pt. iii., pp. 644—689; *Christologie*, iii.; E. SARTORIUS, *Christologische Vorlesungen* (7th ed., 1860); J. A. DORNER, *Die Lehre von der Person Christi*, i. (1845), ii. (1856), (Eng. trans.); TH. A. LIEBNER, *Christologie*, i. (1849); W. F. GESS, *Die Lehre von der Person Christi* (1856), new edn. of the original work, entirely recast (1870); E. DE PRESSENSÉ, *The Redeemer* (Eng. trans.), *Jesus Christ, His Times, Life, and Work* (Eng. trans.); PH. SCHAFF, *Jesus Christ, the Miracle of History;* C. W. HELD, *Selbstzeugnisse Jesu* (1865); K. T. NOESGEN, *Christus der Menschen und Gottessohn* (1869).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

What place must be adjudged from the Supranaturalistic standpoint, and what from the Naturalistic, to the examination as to the Person of the Lord in Christian Dogmatics?—What do we know of His person, even from a wholly extra-Christian standpoint?—What is to be derived from early Christian literature concerning the main facts of His history?—What from the Acts of the Apostles, the Apocalypse, and the Apostolic Epistles?—May the knowledge of Christ be drawn as well out of the Fourth Gospel, as out of the three first?—Wherefore may not also Church History, and the utterances of the Christian consciousness, be received among the sources of the first rank?—To what extent is absolute impartiality necessary and possible in the examination now to be made by us?

[5] John xxi. 25.

SECTION XCI.—THE HISTORIC REALITY OF THE APPEARING OF CHRIST.

The Historic reality of the appearing of the promised Redeemer is raised above all reasonable doubts, even by its mighty operation upon the religious and moral life of Humanity; and no view of His history can for this reason be the true one, according to which the possibility and efficacy of this operation remains in its very essence unexplained. For this explanation neither the Naturalistic, nor the Mythic, nor the abstract Philosophic view of the Gospel history suffices, but only the Christian-historic (Supranaturalistic) view, which on that account must also be firmly held, and powerfully defended against constant opposition, even in the interest of the Christologic examination to be made by Dogmatics.

1. The importance of the examination as to the historic reality of the appearing of Christ is at once self-evident. However essential the distinction between historic and saving belief, the latter rests on the foundation of the former, and loses all its strength on the yielding of this foundation. In the examination as to this reality, all naturally depends on the point of view from which we regard the Gospel narrative. How great is the difference of views on this point, is well known; and the choice of a means of testing these different explanations is, for this reason, of great importance. Ours attaches itself to the familiar maxim, *Nihil esse potest in effectu, quod non antea fuerit in causâ.* No view of the history of the Lord can be the true one, in which the peerless impression of His manifestation and work in the world is left wholly or in part unaccounted for. The person cannot, at all events, have been smaller than the footprint which He has left behind Him; the power which has proceeded therefrom must in itself have been present, before it could communicate itself to others. If that is true, it cannot be difficult for us to choose between the different modes of explaining the Gospel documents, and in doing so to hit on the right course.

2. In speaking of the *Naturalistic* interpretation, we think more especially of that which asserted itself towards the end of last century, in opposition to the older Supranaturalism, and which found its most powerful representatives in the Rationalist, H. E. G. Paulus († 1851), and his spiritual allies. Distinguishing between the facts themselves, and the manner in which they were understood and represented by the narrators, they proceeded from the principle that it must be possible to explain all that the Gospels narrate from the ordinary course of things. Thus, the Angel in the history of the nativity became a young man; the heavenly voice at the baptism, a peal of thunder; the tempter in the wilderness, a scribe; the transfiguration

upon the mountain, the effect of the morning light upon the snow crystals, etc. It is commonly known how Strauss, at his first appearance in 1835, pitilessly exposed all the unnaturalness of this so-called natural interpretation, and tore to shreds the mantle of its assumed scientific character. Yet we must not here speak too soon of burial, unless it be that of a person only apparently dead, who, after a comparatively short time, leaves his tomb again. In the later generation, also, it found defenders,—in young Holland, for instance, in C. Busken Huet;[1] and in France, in the well-known work of E. Renan (1863); while in general the apostles and prophets of modern Naturalism do not think it beneath them, even in this way, to rid themselves of the intolerable element of the miraculous in Holy Scripture. With the preservation of a good scientific conscience, this way cannot be ours. For here arbitrary exegesis and criticism reign undisturbed; psychologically, such an interminable misconception on the part of the contemporaries of the Lord as is here presupposed, is inconceivable; and finally, regarded from its ethical side, this conception brands with an indelible stain the character either of the Lord Himself, or of His first witnesses; while it is, after all, entirely inexplicable that *such* a Christ should be the founder of Christianity, the renewer of the world. Thus, on the principle of the *ratio sufficiens*, this theory must be rejected.

3. No more favourable judgment can be pronounced on the *Mythical* view, which—already earlier applied to the beginning and the end of the Gospel history—was especially represented, although with a modification of ideas from time to time, by D. F. Strauss, in his *Leben Jesu*.[2] He regarded the Gospel account of miracles as the historic garb of what were originally Christian ideas, and which have received their present form as the result of an undesigning inventive tradition. It is impossible here to relate the history of this conflict; among its ablest assailants, the names of Neander, Ullmann, Tholuck, Ebrard, and others, may be mentioned with honour. By them it has been clearly proved what dense mist surrounds this Mythical theory; how inconceivable the origination of such Myths may be regarded in an historic period like that of the Lord, and how entirely this cloud-castle falls if only the genuineness of a single one of the four Gospels is sufficiently established. Strauss himself has shown that he could not maintain his former standpoint, and has, in his *Leben Jesu für das deutsche Volk*, published in 1864, under the influence of the Tübingen School, changed his supposition of undesigning fiction for that of a fiction with a very distinct purpose in view (*Tendenz*) in the writing of miraculous accounts for the most part unhistorical. All the objections, therefore, which are to be brought against the Tübingen reconstruction of the history of the first century and its documents, tell equally against his view; and the arbitrary separation now made by him between an historical and a mythical life of Jesus, is seen to be in principle untenable, since no other sources are open to him for the knowledge of the one, than for that of the other. "He who regards a miraculous life of Jesus as possible," says Opzoomer, "has many sources to draw upon: for a natural life there is not even one. Of

[1] *Brieven over den Bijbel* (1858), p. 70, *sqq*.
[2] First Edn., 1835; second, 1836; third, 1838; fourth, 1840.

what kind in its details the [merely] natural life of Jesus was, uninterspersed by any miracles, this is what lies beyond the limits of our knowledge." Yet this recent combination of the natural and mythical explanation is still sacred, as compared with the motley collection of the most dissimilar elements, served up by Schenkel in his *Characterbild Jesu* (1864); a production castigated precisely as it deserves by Strauss in his crushing reply, *Die Halben und die Ganzen* (1865).

4. By the *abstract-philosophic* modes of explanation we mean those which have not simply been maintained by theologians under the influence of the philosophic systems of others, but by philosophers in the interest of their own system. Take as an example the philosophic interpretation favoured by Spinoza in the seventeenth century, and wholly dominated by the principle that every interpretation which was in conflict with a so-called reasonable truth was definitely to be regarded as inaccurate.—The same is the case with the moral explanation of the Kantian school, which also would have the Gospel history understood in such wise that its meaning should continue to harmonise with the general practical rules of a purely rational system of religion. How much harm such an arbitrary mode of asserting has wrought to the cause of sound Hermeneutics it would be almost impossible to express; but it is beyond doubt that Christian Dogmatics, especially, must reject it in principle, unless it would sign its own death-warrant.—Also with regard to the so-called Empirical philosophy, it can scarcely fail to be perceived that by applying the standard of everyday experience to the history of revelation, it renders the right understanding of the latter in principle impossible, and allows itself to be dominated by an assumption, the right of making which has never yet been proved. The impossibility of writing from this standpoint even a tolerable life of Jesus, by which the problem of Christianity is sufficiently solved, has of late become so strikingly apparent, that this wreck of Naturalism has been turned into a trophy for the Christian faith. No wonder that we perceive in the noblest representatives of the freer tendency,[3] a notable effort to rise to a more satisfactory conception than ever they can attain to by a consistent application of modern Naturalism.

5. When, in opposition to all these, we recommend the *Christian-historical* (supranatural) view, we do not by any means intend that of the older Supranaturalism, as it appeared at the close of last century and the beginning of this, in its one-sided *doctrinaire* character; but one which in principle acknowledges the existence of the Supranatural, and finds this Supranatural revealed in a truly Divine, but at the same time truly human manner, in the person and work of the Lord. Where the older Supranaturalism had scarcely the power or the will to perceive what is truly human in His history, or sought to represent Him now as God, and now again as man; the later Supranaturalism, on the other hand, takes with undisguised preference as its starting-point that which is truly human in His personality; not indeed to make this the end of its research, but rather to rise from it to the Divine and eternal, which is manifested most of all in

[3] Seen, *e.g.*, in *Die Geschichte Jesu von Nazara*, by Professor KEIM, in Switzerland (1867), and in the author of *Ecce Homo*, in England (1866).

this sinless human form. It does not assume *à priori* the truth of every separate account of a miracle, but carefully examines these accounts, and contemplates each one of the parts in connection with the inimitable whole. It acknowledges the possibility of miracles in connection with the Christian idea of God (§ xlv.), but accepts the supposition of their reality in particular cases, only on the ground of well-supported testimony. It overlooks no purely historical difficulties, but claims that the historical criticism be not guided or dominated by a so-called philosophic principle. In a word, it does not ask of philosophy what this *allows* to be true, but of history, duly tested as to its sources, what *is* truth and reality.

6. The right to occupy *this* standpoint follows from the various reasons which argue for the genuineness and credibility of the Gospel narrative (§ xxxviii.), and at the same time from the fact that only by this way of regarding the Gospel history can the requirement laid down in the beginning of this section (par. 1.) receive its satisfaction. The matter in reality stands thus, that we must choose between leaving unsolved the most tremendous problems, and the acceptance of the only satisfactory solution, which is given us by belief in the Supranatural character of the appearing of Christ. The defence of this belief, with all the weapons of knowledge and science which are at the disposal of a valid system of Apologetics, is—in our estimation—a question of life and death, not only for Dogmatics, but also for the whole of the Church and of humanity. It is true, as is said by Christlieb, "The Lord needs not us and our weapons; He who is the Truth itself, is in Himself not only the basis and object of our faith, but also its proof. But His people must learn to believe in this victory, and then, above all, when the course of the age seems to render it questionable."

Compare our *Leven van Jezus*, i. pp. 230—240; C. J. RIGGENBACH, *Ueberblick der Hauptfragen das Leben Jesu betreffend*, in the *Proceedings* of the Evangelical Alliance (1867), p. 271, *sqq.*, of Eng. trans.; UHLHORN, *Die modernen Darstellungen des L. J.* (1866). On the romantic production of Renan, B. TER HAAR, *Wie was Jezus* (1864), and the literature given on pp. 298—300 of that work. Also LUTHARDT, *Die Person J. C.*, in the nine Apologetic Lectures (1869), p. 139, *sqq.*; and my treatise, *De Christus en zijne plaats*, in *Kerk en Theol.* (1871), p. 1, *sqq.*

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

The value of the examination to be made in this place often over-estimated or ignored.—History of the Natural and Mythical interpretation of the Gospel History, in connexion with the revolutionary movements in the social and ecclesiastical sphere.—Difference between Strauss and Baur, and their mutual relation.—Scientific value of the Naturalistic biography of the Lord.—Final aim, claims, and limit of historic criticism from the standpoint of modern Supranaturalism.

SECTION XCII.—THE HUMAN CHARACTER IN CHRIST'S MANIFESTATION.

According to the universal representation of the New Testament, the life of Jesus Christ on earth—however extraordinary in

many respects—was a truly human life; and only as regarded from this point of view can it be estimated at its full value. The Docetic disavowal of this truth, which we see reappearing in different forms in all ages, and which is easily to be explained, is thus not only wanting in all historic basis, but is also in principle and tendency fatal alike to Christian faith and Christian science.

1. To the question, "Who was Jesus?" no answer presents less difficulty than that which first of all confesses Him as a sharer of our own nature. In speaking of the human character of His manifestation we by no means imply that He was merely man, far less an ordinary man, but that He was man in reality and truth. The *reasons* for maintaining this position are as well known as they are satisfactory. All the Evangelists, the fourth not excepted, present Him as a sharer of our nature. They speak of His conception, birth, circumcision, growth, His hunger and fasting, sleeping and waking, joy and sorrow, suffering and death. The Lord Himself speaks of Himself as a man,[1] and even after His resurrection ascribes to Himself a human body,[2] as He had already before spoken of His soul,[3] and of His spirit.[4] On this account also He repeatedly compares Himself with other men,[5] and places His spiritual kindred on a level with His mother and His brethren.[6] He makes the impression upon His contemporaries of being man;[7] and even the name of Son of man, although referring indirectly to something supranatural, is at the same time proof that He thinks nothing human alien to Himself. If He appears here and there in a supranatural character, yet never does He stand before us in a non-natural or extra-natural light. No wonder that all His first witnesses are in full agreement on this point with each other and with Him. Peter speaks of Him as a man ordained of God;[8] Paul with manifest emphasis as the man Christ Jesus,[9] the second Adam, who has appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh.[10] Especially does the Epistle to the Hebrews attach particular importance to His truly human obedience and development;[11] and John goes even so far as to see in the disavowal of this truth the characteristic of a systematic Antichristendom.[12] In harmony with all these testimonies the true humanity of the Lord has been confessed by the orthodox Church of all ages, and notably also has been repeatedly witnessed to and defended by the Netherlands Reformed Church.[13]

2. If we ask as to the logical *conception* [*Begrip*, that which is *comprehended* under the name] which we are to form to ourselves of the human nature of the Lord, it becomes apparent that nothing which truly belongs

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[1] Matt. iv. 4; John viii. 40.
[2] Luke xxiv. 39.
[3] John xii. 27.
[4] Luke xxiii. 46.
[5] Matt. xii. 41, 42.
Matt. xii. 50.
[6] Mark vi. 3.
[7] Acts ii. 22—24.
[8] 1 Tim. ii. 5; comp. Acts xvii. 31.
[9] Rom. viii. 3.
[10] Heb. v. 8, 9.
[11] 1 John iv. 2, 3.
[12] See *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xviii.; *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 35; *Can. Dord.*, ii. 4.

to the nature and essence of man can be said with good reason not to exist in Him. His body was thus subject to human necessities, and mortal, *i.e.*, so constituted that He, like any other, could die. His mind was subject to the law of human development, from a lower to a higher degree. Especially in Luke, chapter the second, is this development depicted to us from the life. Successively is He seen to be infant, child, youth; and then He is sitting in the Temple, not teaching, but hearing, and interrogating the Doctors of the law. His whole personality moreover bears the stamp of a human, oriental, genuinely Israelitish individuality.[14] Yet upon closer contemplation He reveals Himself not only as a man amongst other men, but as *the* man by way of pre-eminence, the second man—as Adam was the first—in whom the ideal of humanity is realised. This also the Church had a dim sense of, when, even at an early period, it regarded and honoured Him—in opposition to a representation of His outward appearance in a mean and uncomely form—as the fairest of the sons of men; while on the other hand with judicious tact it refrained from defining anything as to His character, since precisely in the perfect harmony of His self-manifestation is reflected the matchless sublimity thereof.

3. The disavowal of this true humanity of the Lord, and the denial thereof, has from an early time received the name of *Docetism*—a name originally applied to a well-known sect of the first Christian century. We understand thereby in Dogmatics, not simply an isolated historical phenomenon, but in general every view of the person of our Lord, by which in some way or other aught is detracted from the reality of His human nature. In the course of history we see this Docetic principle coming to light under various shapes. It manifests itself *first* in its *Gnostic-Manichæistic* form. As such it arose even in the Apostolic age,[15] and is especially contested in the epistles of Ignatius.[16] From this standpoint a deceptive *phantom*-body is ascribed to the Lord; and Basilides, for instance, asserted that He had walked about on earth in a heavenly covering, consisting of a fine light-material; while Marcion speaks of Him as descending suddenly into the market-place at Capernaum.—Docetism *afterwards* manifests itself in an *Arian-Apollinaristic* colouring. Arianism offends not only against the truly Divine nature of the Lord, but also against His true human nature, by substituting the former in place of the human *soul* (ψυχή); while Apollinarianism represents its Christ as composed of body, soul, and Logos, and so gives to the last the place of the human *spirit* (πνεῦμα).—In the *Nestorian-Monophysite* controversy, also, there was by no means wanting a Docetic leaven. Though Nestorius never utterly ignored the truly human nature in Christ, he misapprehended its real character; inasmuch as he degraded the human nature into a *deitatis instrumentum*, only outwardly united to the Deity (*per συνάφειαν*). So Monophysitism again, with its confounding of the two natures, could not but force the human nature more or less into the shade. And even Theopaschitism (553) had, however unconsciously, a decidedly Docetic background.—Docetism still continues to exist in the present day in *Popular-ascetic* forms, whenever the essential humanity of the Lord is not earnestly acknowledged along with His essential Divinity. This is the case

[14] John iv. 9. [15] 1 John iv. 2, 3; 2 John 7. [16] *Ad Smyrn.*, 2, 3; *ad Eph.*, 7, 18.

in the Romish Church, where Jesus is very frequently addressed as the supreme Lord, beside whom the necessity is felt of another more truly human advocate, in the person of His glorified mother. But not less is this especially the case with some orthodox Protestants, who at once scent out a heresy whenever they hear it said that the Lord needed to learn anything; that now and then there was something He did not know; that He in reality shuddered at the thought of the last conflict, and fervently prayed for the removal of the sufferings of death; while, on the other hand, inaccurate and obscure conceptions—such, for instance, as that of Jehovah in the manger, God upon the cross—are applauded as Evangelical and orthodox.

4. The rise and constant reproduction of the Docetic error is sufficiently easily explained. It was a natural fruit of the overpowering impression left by the appearing of Christ—an involuntary reaction against Naturalistic Ebionitism. It was felt, as it were instinctively, how much the latter detracts from the greatness of Christ, and men on that account passed over to the opposite extreme. In this fact lies an Apologetic hint of great significance: how great must He have been, who produced such an impression even on the first generation after that of His contemporaries! If the Christ was not more than Strauss or Renan make Him to be, the origin of Docetism is thoroughly incomprehensible. "The original Docetism contains a marked Supranaturalistic element," says Neander. The Docetic error is even—if we must choose between the two—less pernicious than the opposite one. Yet it must in the long run be energetically rejected, and the true humanity of the Lord emphatically maintained. Certainly, tested by the Gospel, the Docetic view lacks every sort of basis for its one-sided assertion. Even by that which is highest and most glorious in the testimony of the Scripture concerning Christ, that which is human in Him is not annihilated, but rather exalted and glorified. As Supranatural He everywhere manifests Himself—if at least by nature we here understand man's present sinful condition—but, we repeat it, as non-human or extra-human, never. On the contrary, He weeps at the grave of the friend whom He raises; He sleeps in the storm, which by His power He stills; He in vain seeks for figs on the tree, which He causes to wither at a word. Thus we ever see the human side coming out not simply beside the Divine, but rather in and together with the Divine; and there is not the slightest reason, where the Divine is acknowledged, for calling in question the existence of what is human in Christ.

5. It can even be demonstrated that all disavowal of the true humanity of the Lord inflicts incalculable injury alike upon Christian faith and theological science. If Christ was man only in appearance, He still remains something foreign to us, and cannot win our confidence. A knowledge and describing of His life in the flesh is then also no longer possible; rather, He has not, properly speaking, lived as man among men at all, but has simply appeared upon earth, as a higher spirit who shows himself in a lower sphere. If only in appearance man, He would merit just as little the name of the Messiah of the Prophets; the latter being certainly promised as man among men, and accordingly all the contemporaries of the Lord expected that the Messiah would, however suddenly, appear as

such.[17] But, besides, all then falls away which we owe to the real incarnation of the Son of God in connection with the work of our salvation. If the Incarnation was simply an appearance, the Redemption also becomes a mere deception,[18] and no provision has in truth been made for our need of a truly human Mediator. The love of the Father also, who abased His Son to such a matchless depth, is now, properly regarded, nothing more than a misleading semblance. The whole of the Gospel history becomes, from this standpoint, a sort of Mythology; Christ no longer the highest ideal and example of His people; and the glorification of our nature in and by Him the illusion of a diseased imagination. It has justly therefore been remarked, that "our salvation, too, depends upon the reality of His body;"[19] and it was aptly asked by the Reformer (Calvin), "if it were fixed upon the minds of all, that a brotherly hand, and one attached to us by the community of our nature, is extended to us by the Son of God, that He may raise us out of this our so abject condition, and set us in heaven; who would not prefer to hold this straight path, rather than to wander in rough and devious bye-ways?" It ought to be recognised and prized as an essential progress in the domain of the more recent believing science, that its best representatives ever increasingly seek to penetrate into the full depth of the Apostolic utterance, that the Word truly *became flesh*. Only of this we must take care, that one essential distinction, of which presently more, be never undervalued or overlooked.

Comp. A. H. NIEMEYER, *De Docetis* (1823); J. H. SCHOLTEN, *Oratio de Docetismo . . . . vitando* (1840), and the literature there collected. Our *Life of Jesus*, i., p. 220; *Christologie*, iii., p. 175; and E. DE PRESSENSÉ, *Early Years of Christianity*, i., p. 430.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Significance and truth of 1 John iv. 2, 3.—In which of the Synoptical Gospels is the truly human in the Lord most prominent?—Is the fourth Gospel absolutely free from a Docetic character?—Significance for this investigation of the Epistle to the Hebrews.—What is ever to be presupposed in the defence of the true humanity, if this latter is to have any significance?—What may be determined with some probability with regard to the means whereby—according to Luke ii. 52—the Lord increased in wisdom?—Origin, varying forms, and continual significance of Docetism.

SECTION XCIII.—HIS UNSULLIED PURITY.

Although very man, and in all things tempted as we are, the Lord nevertheless remained perfectly free from every inclination to sin and contamination by it. On good grounds, therefore, has the Christian Church of all ages confessed Him as the Holy and Perfect One, in whom the Ideal of humanity is fully realised; and has maintained this its confession against manifold opposition.

[17] See, *e.g.*, Justin Martyr, *Dial. c. Tryph.*, c. 49.
[18] Cyrill. Hierosolym. *Cat.* 4. *εἰ φαντασία ἦν ἡ ἐνανθρώπησις, φαντασία καὶ ἡ σωτηρία.*
[19] *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xix.

For the just appreciation of Christ and Christianity, this confession is of preponderating importance; yet it is to be expected only where the necessity and possibility of a moral miracle like this for the redemption of sinners is acknowledged, and something still more than man is seen in this perfect Son of Man.

1. "In all things like unto His brethren, *except sin*, *χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας*."[1] In accord with this word of Holy Scripture the Christian Church of all ages has acknowledged in its Founder the Holy and Sinless One. In the Œcumenical Symbols the separate mention of this particular was, it would seem, not even regarded as necessary; while in those of the Netherlands Reformed Church this is made only in few words.[2] In our day, however, in consequence of different circumstances, the question as to the absolute sinlessness of the Lord has been brought into full light with an earnestness before unknown—as well in the domain of Dogmatics, as in that of Apologetics—and it still continues with good reason to attract the attention in the highest degree.

2. In dealing with this question, it is first of all necessary to know *whether*, and *in what way* anything positive can be determined with regard thereto. Even the former is denied, with an appeal to the incomplete and fragmentary character of the sacred history. In answer to this it must be observed—as will soon become apparent—that this history contains sufficient *data* not to leave us wholly in uncertainty, provided that the historic point under investigation be examined in a purely *historic* manner. For until lately a dogmatic-philosophic method was pursued, where the question as to the sinlessness of the Lord was under examination. The starting-point was made from the Divine nature of the Redeemer; from the absolute necessity for His sinlessness, in order to effect the work of our redemption; from the miracles or predictions which afford a ground and justification for our ascribing to Him this property, etc. It is scarcely, however, necessary to prove how little value is to be attached to such an *à priori* method, and how the indispensableness of anything from a dogmatic point of view is no proof whatever for its historic reality. And although the Christian consciousness requires that He from whom the highest life has proceeded should have Himself possessed this life in the fullest measure, it cannot on its own authority proclaim that He was from the very beginning, always, and in the most absolute sense of the word, sinless. An historic question like this remains an open one, and without a solution, so long as it is not decided by an appeal to *facts* which admit of no doubt or contradiction. To the facts, more than anything else, must our attention thus be directed.

3. This already is in itself a fact of great significance, that the *idea* of sinlessness in its full extent originates on Christian soil, and is met with nowhere else in the Gentile world. Demosthenes, for instance, ascribes the not-sinning to the gods alone; Epictetus and Cicero speak of it as impossible for men; and what Xenophon says of Socrates,[3] that no one ever heard him speak, or saw him do anything bad, can certainly only be

[1] Heb. iv. 15.; cf. ii. 17.
[2] *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xviii.; *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 16; *Can. Dord.*, ii. 1.
[3] *Memorabilia*, i. 1.

understood in the relative sense of outward perversion of manners. In Judaism and Mohammedanism, also, the notion of absolute sinlessness is wanting. That it is rooted only in Christian soil seems incomprehensible, unless one has lived who made upon his contemporaries the irresistible impression that He was really "the prototype of the morally good."

4. That which the existence of the notion of sinlessness leads us to suppose, we see confirmed by a number of *witnesses*, which, even separately regarded, but of course much more when taken together, are worthy of the highest confidence.—In the first place there is the unanimous testimony of Jesus' *friends* and disciples, bearing witness to His moral purity. Listen to the utterances of Peter in Acts iii. 14, 1 Pet. i. 19, ii. 22; of Paul, in 2 Cor. v. 21, Rom. viii. 3, comp. Heb. vii. 26, 27; of John, in 1 John ii. 2, iii. 5.—Their declaration is supported by that of *strangers* and *enemies*. Judas, Herod, Pilate and his wife, the thief on the cross, and the centurion at its foot, all received the same impression of this personality,—that of high moral excellence.—How far this excellence must have extended may be inferred especially from the Lord's own *testimony concerning Himself*, as He repeatedly gives this, either directly or indirectly, as well in the three first Gospels,[4] as above all in that of John,[5] under the most diverse circumstances of His life, and even with death immediately before Him. Particularly is the memorable word of John viii. 46 of importance in this connection, not so much because no single answer is received to this challenge, as on account of the unparalleled self-consciousness of Him who could address it to aliens and foes; while He—the meek and lowly of heart—breathes no single word of confession of guilt, either to God or man. A self-consciousness like this cannot possibly have been in this mouth the result either of self-deception or of the deception of others; it must consequently be accepted as the expression of an astonishing, but objectively certain, truth.—And this the more, since it is raised above all contradiction by the testimony of the *Father* Himself. We refer to all the manifestations of the Divine good-pleasure taken in combination, which present themselves in the history of the life of Jesus, to the appearing of angels, the voices from heaven, the resurrection and ascension of the Saviour especially,[6]—facts, of which the historic truth is here naturally presupposed, but then also the dogmatic significance of which for the question under consideration cannot be ambiguous.—And in connection with this must be taken into account the testimony as to the *effect* of the manifestation of Christ; especially that of the great transformation wrought by Him in the individual man and in mankind. It can be proved that nothing evil, but on the contrary all that is really good, has proceeded from Christ Himself, and been developed in communion with Him; whilst even those most advanced in the domain of morals continue to look up to Him as an unsurpassed example. All this is wholly inexplicable, unless we take into our hands the key afforded by His absolute sinlessness.

5. That which all these witnesses testify is,—and this fact is here especially of importance,—constantly anew confirmed by the irresistible *impres-*

[4] Matt. vii. 11; xi. 29, 30; xii. 50.
[5] John iv. 34; vi. 38; viii. 29; xv. 10; xvii. 4.
[6] Rom. i. 4.

sion which the attentive contemplation of the person and manifestation of the Lord produces even apart from our will. It is and continues an impression of moral *harmony*, undisturbed by any false note. If every human personality has its weak side as well as its stronger one, who is able to point out the weak side of this holy life? Precisely the equipoise of the different powers of soul and spirit, and not the preponderance of the one over the other, proclaims the Lord incomparably great. In addition to this, there is the perfect *freedom* which we discover in His whole outward and inner life. He stands free in the presence of law and tradition, of friend and foe, of the world and the Father, whom He obeys not otherwise than in perfect freedom. Everywhere He feels and manifests Himself as the Son of the house, who is free, and makes free, in opposition to the slaves of sin.[7] And this freedom, which with the latter has long degenerated into self-will and self-seeking, He reveals in holy, boundless, perfect *love*, which is here—as nowhere else on earth—the source and bond of the highest moral perfection. If we combine all this, it very soon becomes apparent that we have not asserted too much, but rather too little, in saying that the personality itself stands yet far above the impression left by it. No wonder, after all this, that the belief in the unsullied purity of the Lord is as old as Christianity itself. If our knowledge of the Lord is on many points imperfect, in *this* respect at least it need not be uncertain.

6. While the certainty of the Lord's absolute freedom from sin may be sufficiently justified for the Christian consciousness, it is not easy to give a satisfactory answer to the question as to the proper *nature* and essence of the sinlessness of Christ. And this must be the case, since it is never in the Gospel described formally and at large; and we know from experience that nothing is less easy for us than to read deep in the heart of the Holy and the Pure One. Thus much is, however, at once apparent, that giving credit to the above-mentioned series of testimonies, we have to ascribe the attribute of sinlessness not only to the *outward* life of our Lord, but also—and above all—to His *inner* life. He is seen to be free, not only from every perverse act, but also from sin itself, conceived of as an inward principle, dominating the heart and life. Here the fruit is ripe, because the tree is healthy, and the root is sound and good. We must here speak not only of freedom from *sins*, but also of freedom from *sin;* and this idea is to be understood not only in the negative sense of the absence of sin, but in the positive sense of perfect purity and holiness. Under the influence of the assaults of unbelief, the more recent Apologetics has contented itself too much with merely defending the first of these; and certainly this is something, yea, relatively much, but not enough, because there is indeed the right and title to more than this. That which here reveals itself to our eye is an harmonious continuity of moral and spiritual life; no mere childish, nor even sacred, innocence, but the perfect purity of Him who had had a view of sin very close at hand, but had unceasingly resisted, and had been at every point victorious.

7. Always, however, is the sinlessness of the Lord to be regarded as an attribute of His true *humanity*, and thus to be clearly distinguished from

[7] John viii. 34—36.

the absolute holiness of Him who cannot even be tempted of evil.[8] The moral purity of the Lord did not in itself exclude even the least possibility of sinning. Had such possibility been absolutely wanting, the former would, even in the Son of Man, have lost all moral worth. The great thing here is precisely this, that He who was exposed to the severest temptation, ever so maintained the dominion over Himself, that it could be said of Him, He was able not to sin—*potuit non peccare.* As the result of a sustained conflict, He so perfectly vanquished the power of evil, that sinning became for Him *morally* an absolute impossibility; in other words, the *potuit non peccare* was ever more raised to a *non potuit peccare*—He could not sin. That which John speaks of every believer[9] has its application undoubtedly in a yet higher sense to the Captain of our Salvation. We must take care, however, that we do not explain the sinlessness of Christ as arising from an original, irresistible necessity of nature, but rather derive it from a free, moral, and spiritual governing-principle of the life. The actual possibility of sinning continued to exist for Him, because He was man as we are, exposed to so much the more terrible temptations in proportion as His life was hastening to its end; and that He withstood this possibility to the end, in no case detracts from His true humanity. The example of Adam before the fall shows that it is possible to be man without being a sinner. Sin belongs not to the original nature of mankind, but to its present condition; and he who resists and conquers it, is thereby not less man, but even far more so than he who daily sins. And on this account we must think, in connection with the person of Christ, of a *posse peccare*, which, in consequence of His own free determination of will, in no case became a reality; of a formal freedom, which was harmoniously raised to the most real (moral) freedom; of a concrete possibility of temptation, but which was at all times victoriously repelled. No doubt it will ever continue difficult to do equal justice to the two conceptions: really tempted, and yet remaining without sin; even in the domain of our own inner life, the precise point at which outward temptation becomes an inner one, and this becomes a sin, is hidden in obscurity and shadow, and the history of the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, especially, is a rock marked out by many a shipwreck. However explained, it becomes convincingly apparent that all the temptations in the life of the Lord, of which His history speaks, came to Him not from within, but from without; that, even in the most violent assaults, He overcame them by the sword of the Spirit; and that, in short, the humbling word of Matt. xv. 19, is on His lips no word of self-accusation, but simply the fruit of experience and of the knowledge of man. And while, from the nature of the case, there remains also many a question unanswered in connection with this subject, yet the obscurity attending the *how* is far from affording a sufficient reason for disputing the *that*, since the miraculous fact itself may be satisfactorily defended against objections of various kinds.

8. The *completeness* of an Anamartesia, of which we have thus far learnt to know the certainty and the cause, has been, and still is, disputed partly on *historical* grounds, partly upon those of a *philosophical* nature. As far

[8] ἀπείραστος κακῶν, James i. 13.

[9] 1 John iii. 9b.

as the former are concerned, it is true that touching the greater part of the life of Jesus absolutely nothing, or but little, is known to us. But if the sacred documents on this account fall short of defending the confession of the absolute purity and holiness of the Lord against all possible opposition, yet they contain enough—as is evident from what has been said—amply to justify the moral conviction called forth by the impression of this appearing. The Divine witness (Matt. iii. 17) impresses its seal upon the whole previous hidden life; the testimony of the Lord concerning Himself (John viii. 46) counterbalances many an unanswered query; and a harmony, like that of the public life of the Lord, were inconceivable, if it had been even temporarily preceded by a moral disharmony at an earlier period. The assailant of the sinlessness of the Lord must consequently adduce stronger arguments against it, than we have mentioned in its favour, according to the rule: *neganti incumbit probatio.* In reality this has also been attempted, and incidents out of the *secluded* and the *public* life of Jesus, and out of the *last* days and hours of His life, have been appealed to, as being thought to cast some stain upon His mode of thinking, speaking, or acting. With how little ground, however, it is not difficult to show.

The one detail belonging to our Lord's early *life of seclusion*, preserved to us by Luke alone, chapter ii. 40—52, contains nothing which gives us reason to entertain doubt as to His sinlessness. For there is nothing to show that His remaining behind at Jerusalem was the result of design, or was His own fault. Just as little does His first word (ver. 49 b) testify to any waywardness of disposition with regard to Mary or Joseph; it undoubtedly shows that the consciousness of a higher origin and work manifested itself at this comparatively early period. Yet the development spoken of, here and in verse 52, may none the less have been entirely normal. For by "increasing" is here meant no transition from the imperfect to that which is better, but progress from the relatively to the absolutely perfect; and precisely in this fact is the greatness of the Lord manifested, that He was perfectly and wholly child and youth, before He appeared as a man, fully matured. He who finds a sense of moral imperfection in the fact that the Lord submits to receive baptism at the hands of John, has assuredly never considered with sufficient earnestness the conversation before His baptism, nor that which happened at and after this event.

In the beginning of the Lord's *public* life His word to Mary (John ii. 4) has been thought to be in some degree wounding in its nature, and in conflict with the respect due to His mother. But all here depended on the tone; and that Mary by no means felt herself hurt thereby is evident from the remainder of the history: in itself the instruction had nothing unsuitable, was even called for and necessary, and the name of honour, "woman" (γύναι), is still given even from the cross to the blessed among mothers.—He who finds a difficulty with regard to the cleansing of the temple (John ii. 13—17) overlooks in connection therewith the distinction between holy and unhallowed wrath, the rights of the Zealots in Israel, the self-command of love, and the lofty impression left by this act of the Lord on the first witnesses thereof.—The incident with the Canaanitish mother (Matt. xv. 21—28) testifies just as little of arbitrary severity as of a narrow particularism, but only of profound wisdom combined with an inextinguishable

sense of the limits of His mission. In reality the Lord could not, in accordance with a higher order of things, grant the prayer of the Gentile woman, before she had shown herself by persevering faith a true daughter of Abraham.—That by the cursing of the fig tree by the wayside,[10] He had interfered with any rights of private property, is just as little capable of proof as that He here acted from an unreasoning impulse. It was a holy symbolical act, to which the most sublime lesson is immediately attached.—That which took place in connection with the Gadarene swine[11] loses in great measure its difficulty if it is considered how infinitely high the deliverance of a human soul stands above the loss of numerous animal lives; while it does not even appear that Jesus really willed or directly caused this latter.—Or shall we, on the ground of John vii. 8, as compared with ver. 10, bring against Him the charge of inconsistency? But manifestly He spoke of "going up" in the sense of "publicly journeying with the festive caravan," which thus, in the whole connection of this discourse, does not exclude a more silent and private entrance.—The word in Matt. xix. 17, finally, does not absolutely deny that He is good, any more than it will say that He is God; but it had simply the design of bringing the fluent and superficial questioner at once to consider what high significance must be attached to the word "good," so lightly applied by him to the as yet but little known Rabbi of Nazareth.

Of the *last* period of the Lord's life, neither His relation to Judas, nor His prayer in Gethsemane, nor His anxious complaint on the cross, affords us any appearance of reason for refusing to Him the name of holy and sinless. In the minutest details even, the first-mentioned reveals to us the constant manifestation of holy and long-suffering love; while the two other instances, properly explained, prove only the true humanity of the Lord, and the depth of His feeling of suffering.

9. Other historical difficulties are perhaps yet more baseless. The objections adduced from the more *philosophical* side against the doctrine which we are defending, are partly of a more speculative, partly of a more empirical nature.—It is thought inconceivable that in any province, especially in the highest, the originator should at once take and retain the lead, without even, after the lapse of ages, being surpassed by any other. And this is really inconceivable in the domain of knowledge and science; but, at the same time, not wholly so in that of art, in which sometimes the mightiest heroes—as in the case of Homer, Apelles, etc.—continue to stand superior to the attainments of many a later age; and least of all is it the case in the sphere of religion, especially where this rests upon the fact of special revelation. Here, on the contrary, precisely the founder and initiator must evidently be the greatest of all; since in Him there must be originally present that which is awakened and called forth in others by no other than Him.—If it is further said, with Strauss, that the ideal of moral perfection is, from the nature of the case, realised, not in an individual, but only slowly and by degrees, in and by the race: the assertor is perfectly right, from the standpoint of the Hegelian philosophy. But the claim of this latter to a patent for infallibility, is hitherto absolutely

[10] Mark xi. 14. [11] Matt. viii. 28—34.

unproved; and if Christianity sees, on good historical grounds, the moral ideal realised in its Founder, it confesses, at the same time, that precisely in fellowship with Him is it by degrees and after a long time attained in its full extent by redeemed humanity. This whole objection arises from a misconception of the right of personality in the domain of spiritual things, and overlooks the fact that the moral ideal either never can be realised, or can be realised only in an individuality entirely consecrated to God.—Or if the empirical school points us to the absolutely universal fact of the sinfulness of all men upon earth, it compels us thus, indeed, to acknowledge that here there has in reality been an exception to the otherwise universal rule; but it has not, from its standpoint, the right to reject the exception as something absolutely impossible, since the proof that it is unhistoric has not hitherto been given.—Or if, finally, it is asserted that a perfectly sinless Christ precisely thereby loses His moral greatness, and is no longer suited to be our highest exemplar, the answer is simple. It is not the question, what Christ indeed would be the greatest in the estimation of this or that philosophy; but what Christ a credible history proclaims to us. Just because man is created for endless perfection, can even the Divine perfection be presented to him for imitation.[12]

10. It can surprise no one that we thus at large defend the doctrine—nay, the fact—of the Lord's sinlessness, against all opposition. For the *importance* of the subject very soon becomes manifest to us, whether we connect it with the doctrine of *revelation*, or with that of *redemption* in Christ. As concerns the former, precisely the absolute sinlessness of the Lord authorises our unreservedly believing His word, and seeing in His person nothing less than the image of the Father manifest in human form. Sin and the lie are, in the language of the New Testament,[13] and from the nature of the case, correlative ideas; and on no one can we more certainly rely, as having spoken the truth, than upon Him who beheld it with absolutely unclouded eye, and, moreover, never sought His own honour.[14] Now we know that he who sees Him, has seen the Father, since no troubled sea can thus clearly reflect the image of the sun in the firmament. He does not merely speak the truth, but He *is* the truth, precisely because He has, and is, the life, interrupted by no power of sin.—And as concerns the doctrine of Redemption, the sinlessness of the Lord serves, more than anything else, as a guarantee that He voluntarily laid down His life,[15] actuated by no other principle than that of perfect obedience and love. But, on this very account, His death on the cross becomes an act which has the highest moral significance, and His sacrifice obtains such value that, in the sight of God, a propitiatory power can be ascribed to it.[16] And as thus only a holy and obedient Mediator could redeem us from the chastisement of sin, so also can He alone free us from its dominion. Defiled by sin, He must have died even for His own sins; Himself imperfect, He could not possibly, by word, example, and spirit, lead others on to perfection. Thus, He could not have been to us anything of all that which, according to 1 Cor. i. 30, He is made of God unto His people.

[12] Matt. v. 48.
[13] John viii. 46.
[14] John vii. 18.
[15] John x. 17, 18.
[16] Rom. v. 18; Phil. ii. 8.

Only now could He become to them, in the fullest sense of the word, the perfect High Priest,[17] the Author and the Finisher of the Faith,[18] and, at the same time, the highest Exemplar, for their imitation and sanctification.[19]

11. After all this we may boldly maintain that the disavowal of the unsullied purity of the Lord inevitably leads to the undermining and rejection of the whole of Christianity. Wherefore should we call ourselves any longer Christians, where the highest pledge is wanting that in Christ is given on the part of God a perfect revelation, an everlasting redemption? If He is not really sinless, although He may be called excellent, He does not stand essentially above us; and out of fear of Docetism we inevitably fall back to the level, nay, sink beneath the level, of the ancient Ebionitism. Yet modern Naturalism, in order to be consistent, cannot but—in opposition to each renewed defence—persist in its denial of the fact of His sinlessness. It must from its standpoint apply in this case also the words of Renan, "*On ne sort jamais immaculé des luttes de la vie.*" Certainly, as a mere natural result of the co-operation of finite causes, a truly sinless man is absolutely incomprehensible, and in diametrical opposition with all the *data* of every-day experience. *The arising of a single Faultless and Perfect Being, among all the children of men, is inconceivable without a moral miracle;* i.e., *without a direct operation and intervention of God in the natural course of development of a sinful human race.*

12. Yet with this is already answered in principle the question, which here presents itself at the close: In what way and under what condition alone, is the defence of the spotless purity of the Lord, on good grounds, to be permanently expected? Only, namely, in the way of the Christian belief in Revelation, which has acknowledged both the necessity and the possibility of such a moral miracle, but at the same time has seen in this perfect Son of man, *something more than man.* As well the nature of the case as experience goes to show that once one has come to the recognition of the sinlessness, it is impossible to stop short at this; but one is compelled to take a step in advance, unless one would take a step backward. Of two things, one: either Christ was a mere man, for the explanation of whose history a supranatural factor in *no* case *may* be called in, and then we must assume that He was wholly man as we are, in this respect also, that He was defiled by human imperfection and sin; or, if we cannot accept this last, we must necessarily suppose that He was not distinguished in degree, but specifically, from the race to which He stood in the closest relation; in other words, we must truly recognise in Him something *supra-human.* A third possibility does not exist, save in the domain of empty abstraction. With logical consequence the recognition of the unsullied purity thus leads us to that of the heavenly origin, and the more than human character, of the Lord; while he who denies the latter, even with the best will, cannot long continue to hold the former. This is so certain that it even seems impossible to answer all the objections raised against the Anamartesia, if one will recognise in Jesus nothing more than merely a sinless man. In reality He has spoken words and wrought deeds which do not fit within the framework of our conception of spotless human purity;

[17] Heb. vii. 26, 27. [18] Heb. xii. 1, 2. [19] Ephes. v. 1, 2; 1 John ii. 6.

and which only gain sense and significance when there is, at the same time, seen in Him the Man from heaven, the incarnate Son of God. From this, naturally, by no means follows the impossibility of duly maintaining the sinlessness of the Lord; but rather the necessity for not regarding this miracle by itself—as is only too frequently the case—but for bringing it into connection with the Lord's suprahuman origin and dignity, and rising from the former to the recognition of the latter. "The true man," as has been well said by Ebrard, "must be given to humanity from heaven."

Compare, in addition to the well-known and still highly interesting treatise of C. ULLMANN, *The Sinlessness of Jesus* (8th edition of the original, 1870); especially—against the now famous writings of Pecaut and Strauss—the monograph of Dr. P. J. GOUDA QUINT, *De zondeloosheid des Heeren* (1862), where a copious literature is presented; to which may be added the *Leven Jezus* written by us, i., p. 569, *sqq.*; *Christologie*, iii., pp. 193—211. Further, J. A. DORNER, *The perfect Holiness of J. C. proved from His Works* (1862); ROGER COLLARD, *Essai sur le Caractère de J. C.* (1866); and, above all, the profound article of B. WEISS, *Sündlosigk. Jesu*, in Herzog's *R. E.*, third supplementary volume.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

The significance of this dogma.—Whence is it that the sinlessness of the Lord has been, more than ever before, assailed and defended during the last half-century?—What conception of sin lies at the basis of the examination as to this article of faith?—In what manner has this doctrine been developed in the course of ages?—Explanation of Matt. iv. 1—11, as compared with Luke iv. 13b.—What is meant when Paul, in Rom. vi. 10a., teaches that Christ died to *sin*?—What is the difference between the state of *not having sinned*, of immunity from *sins*, and of immunity from *sin*?—The maintaining of the demonstrative force of John viii. 46, and some other places.—Is there any reason for giving especially the name of religious genius to Jesus?—Is it true that the recognition of the sinlessness of Christ prevents (excludes) that of His moral greatness and imitableness for His people?—Why is it not possible to stop short at the recognition of Him as perfect man: nothing less, but also nothing more?—Difference and connection between the metaphysical and the ethical element of Christology.

SECTION XCIV.—HIS SUPRAHUMAN DESCENT.

That which the unsullied purity of the Lord of itself leads us to suppose, is expressly stated by His first witnesses, and placed beyond all doubt by His own declarations—that He, the Perfect Man, was originally infinitely more than man. We speak of Him, therefore, as the Son of God, not simply in the ethical or theocratical sense of that term, but also in the metaphysical sense, and indicate thereby that He is partaker not only of the true and unsullied human nature, but also is in truth partaker of the Divine, and consequently is infinitely far exalted above every creature in heaven and on earth. As such He is Himself the greatest Miracle of history, in the manifestation of whom even that which is

otherwise unheard of and incomprehensible, ceases to be absolutely inconceivable.

1. The step in advance, which we here take in the way of our investigation, has naturally been prepared for by that which precedes, and calls above all things for a further examination of witnesses. That, even in respect to Christology, a comparatively great difference is found amongst the writers of the New Testament, is equally well known as it is easily explained; but the more at the very outset is it worthy of notice that not one of them regarded the Lord either as mere man, or as man only in appearance. However little the General Epistles of *James* and *Jude* may contain bearing on our subject, the name of Lord—κύριος—applied in the Old Testament to the Godhead, is here repeatedly used of the Christ. The writers mention this name, as that of the Lord of Glory,[1] and the only Ruler,[2] along with that of God; they describe themselves as His servants, and thus ascribe to Him a kingly post-existence, after His departure from the earth, which is wholly inconceivable, without a personal pre-existence. Of the first believers, indeed, it is manifest that they, Christians of the Jews, by "calling upon His name"[3] rendered to Him Divine homage. It is remarkable how, notably in *Peter*, the testimony concerning the suprahuman in Christ constantly sounds forth more powerfully. In the Acts of the Apostles He is still spoken of by this Apostle as a man sent of God, the Holy and the Just One, the Prince of Life.[4] In the First Epistle,[5] however, His name is mentioned in one breath with that of the Father and the Holy Ghost; His life on earth is spoken of as a manifestation, after a previous foreknowledge of Him on the part of God; and the Spirit of the Prophets, as identical with that of Christ. Perhaps in 1 Pet. iv. 11, but certainly in 2 Pet. iii. 18, there is presented to the glorified Saviour the honour of a doxology, the like of which is nowhere rendered to the creature; and in 2 Pet. i. 1—if at least this epistle is genuine—the name of God, as well as that of Saviour, is, according to the most probable interpretation, given Him by the Apostle. The Apostle *Paul* recognises yet more clearly the suprahuman in the Christ; not merely in those Epistles which are disputed or doubted, but also in those of which the genuineness is readily accepted by all. Let any one read and reflect upon such utterances as Rom. i. 3, 4; viii. 2, 3, 32; x. 9—13; 1 Cor. x. 4; 2 Cor. iii. 17; iv. 6; viii. 9; Gal. i. 1; iv. 4; and, further, the proof-passages, Phil. ii. 6—8; Col. i. 15—20; ii. 9. The name of God also (Θεός), is by him without hesitation ascribed to the Saviour, according to the only accurate interpretation of Rom. ix. 5; Tit. ii. 13.[6] The same confession is heard in a number of places in the Epistle to the Hebrews;[7] and, as far as the essence

[1] James ii. 1.
[2] Jude 4.
[3] Acts ix. 14.
[4] Acts ii. 22; iii. 14, 15.
[5] 1 Pet. i. 2, 11, 20.
[6] Acts xx. 28, and 1 Tim. iii. 16, frequently cited in this connection, labour under critical difficulties of a preponderating nature.
[7] Heb. i. 3; v. 8; xiii. 8, and other places.

of the confession itself is concerned, *Thomas* entirely agrees therewith.[8] The Apostle *John*, who communicates to us this last, received in the ancient Church the name of Theologus, on account of his unequivocal and powerful confession of the Godhead of the Lord. Think of the beginning of his Gospel and of his first Epistle,[9] but not less of so many a sublime utterance of the Apocalypse, which would sound like blasphemy, unless He to whom it applied had been more than man. On the sense and force of each of these utterances a more particular criticism is to be found in connection with its treatment in the *Theology of the New Testament*.[10] But what here especially must not pass unnoticed, is that all these testimonies, given by different writers, independently of each other, by men of Jewish birth and education, and from the strictly Monotheistic standpoint, are unanimous, unequivocal, and complete; that they are, for the most part, the result of personal eye-witness, and of the deep impression thereby produced; above all, that they may be termed simply the distinct echo of the personal self-testimony of the Lord, which in more than one way has called forth, lent force to, and set the crown on theirs.

2. As concerns the utterances of *Jesus Himself*, even though the Modern criticism had left us only one of the four Gospels, the least of all would be more than sufficient for maintaining the assertion, that He ascribed to Himself suprahuman descent and dignity. Even the name of Son of Man is, for the observant eye, simply the transparent veil which covers the supranatural in Him; and in the Synoptical Gospels, as well as John, the Rabbi of Nazareth speaks in a tone which would sound blasphemous indeed, if He had been nothing more than the pious and genial son of the carpenter. See Matt. vii. 21; ix. 2; x. 37; xi. 27; xii. 6; xviii. 20; xxi. 37; xxiv. 35, 36; xxviii. 18—20, and the parallel places in Mark and Luke. Especially in the Fourth Gospel do we meet with declarations which leave no further room for doubt. On the one hand, He declares Himself, it is true, absolutely dependent on the Father;[11] but, at the same time, He places Himself in such relation to the Father as no one on earth besides Himself can speak of occupying. Here, also, He makes mention of *his* Father, in distinction from *our* Father—this latter word being understood in the sense in which He places it on the lips of His praying disciples. He speaks of Himself as God's only-begotten Son,[12] refers to His personal pre-existence before Abraham, yea, before the creation of the world,[13] ascribes to Himself absolute oneness of power with the Father,[14] which can only be based on unity of nature, and moreover, as is well known, accepts with approbation the reverential homage of the believing Thomas.[15] He repeatedly distinguishes between His present form of existence and that in which He was before,[16] and demands for His person that which, according to the letter and spirit of the Old Testament, may in this sense be ascribed to no creature.[17] We might mention more proofs, but enough; so long as it has not

[8] John xx. 28.
[9] Compare also 1 John v. 20.
[10] See our *Handbook, in loc.*
[11] John v. 19, 26.
[12] John iii. 16.
[13] John iii. 13; viii. 58; xvii. 5, 24.
[14] John x. 30.
[15] John xx. 28, 29.
[16] John vi. 62; xvi. 28.
[17] John v. 28; xiv. 1, 11.

been shown, either that these utterances are all forgeries, or that they are to be understood in an entirely different way, we must consequently hold that the humble Jesus *willed* to be recognised as something infinitely more than merely the most excellent of men, and we cannot escape the conclusion which necessarily follows therefrom.

3. Even at an earlier stage (§ lii.) we saw what is meant in general by the name and the idea of a Divine Sonship. Now, however, the question is whether there exist sufficient grounds for applying this name to the historical person of Jesus of Nazareth, and in what definite sense we employ this appellation with regard to Him. This question is the more to the point, since the name of Son of God is used in the Scriptures of the New Testament, in more than one sense, with regard to our Lord. He is now termed the Son of God on account of His miraculous conception and birth as man;[18] now it is said that He was manifested to be so by His resurrection from the dead;[19] and now, again, this title of honour is conferred by Himself on the peace-makers.[20] His disciples and contemporaries often used this name as indicative of the long-promised Messiah, of whom it was frequently used in the Scriptures of the Old Testament in the Theocratic sense.[21] Nevertheless, it is felt to be the great question in what sense the Lord called *Himself* the Son, in contradistinction not only from the Father, but from absolutely all men; and to this question there can, in our opinion, be no other answer given than the one already mentioned. The name of Messiah in itself points to something suprahuman, although this was overlooked by the greater part of the contemporaries of Jesus: the Scriptures of the Old Testament ascribe to the Christ not simply the highest Theocratic rank, but also a Divine descent and dignity in the proper sense of the term.[22] The Messianic dignity thus already by implication involves in itself the Divine Sonship; an everlasting kingdom, such as is here promised, could not possibly be founded and governed by one who was nothing more than man. On this account the name Son of God is by no means an apposition to the synonymous title of Messiah: it is no name of *office*, but of *person* and *nature*, borne in a sense wholly unique by Him who appeared as Messiah upon earth. He is called so, not because He, the perfect Man, was the Redeemer of Israel; but because from eternity He stood to the Father in a relation of nature and being, which could not better be indicated than by this appellation. Not only the ethical, but also the metaphysical properties of the Divine nature are to be ascribed to Him, if this name is to receive its due. Not that this perfect Man was, as such, also in the moral sense the Son of God; but that He who is by nature God's own eternal Son, went about on earth as perfect man, is with the fullest right the doctrine of Scripture and the Church.[23] The superficial observation of Réville, that the confession of the Divine nature of the Lord was only of later origin,

[18] Luke i. 35.
[19] Rom. i. 3, 4.
[20] Matt. v. 9.
[21] Ps. ii. 7; Matt. xxvi. 63; John i. 49.
[22] Isa. ix. 6, 7; Micah v. 2; Dan. vii. 13, 14; Mal. iii. 1.
[23] See *Neth. Conf.*, Art. x.; *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 33.

and therefore the original Christian conviction was preserved with the greatest purity am ngst the Ebionites, Marcionites, etc., is most triumphantly refuted by a more thorough study of history. Even the attentive perusal of the writings of the Apostolic Fathers alone is sufficient to lead us to an entirely different judgment, and to convince us that the Christian Church *never* satisfied itself with the acknowledgment that its Head and Lord was a true and holy man.

4. The question, whether a duality of nature in the unity of person is really to be ascribed to our Lord, is already in principle answered by that which has been said. We are not ignorant, it is true, of the many difficulties which are connected with the conception of two natures in one person--even the word Nature, from *nasci* (to be born), employed with regard to the Godhead, may afford occasion for misunderstanding—and we should be sorry to take the responsibility of a single sophism which might easily follow therefrom. But yet, if we hold our Lord to be God's own Son, who as such before personally existed, and in the fulness of time truly became man, we are compelled to distinguish between the *original* nature and that which was voluntarily *assumed*, and to suppose that the two, however closely united, were primarily distinct. He who rejects this position, and on the contrary asserts the absolute identity of the purely human and the Divine, *quâ talis*, becomes, to be consistent, a Pantheist. On the nature of the *relation* between the two, more hereafter; here we have to do only with the fact that in reality a truly Divine nature must be ascribed to the Lord, as well as the truly human nature, of which we have spoken in § xcii. We speak of Him as the Son of God, not simply in the sense in which the first man was so called,[24] but as indicating that He who here went about in the form of a servant, before lived as God, and, even after His coming upon earth, ceased not to be the Word that was with God and was God. If the justice of this position were not already sufficiently assured by the Lord's own utterances and those of His first witnesses, it would have been raised beyond all doubt by the history of His life itself. For earthly meanness of condition and heavenly greatness, we see them here from beginning to end, run side by side as two lines,—nay, as two streams in one channel, inseparably flow together. We hear words, we are witnesses of acts and sufferings, which fall wholly beyond our conception, even of the highest and purest humanity; but, at the same time, the Divine never meets us here in any other than a truly and purely human garb. Now the one, now the other, comes into greater prominence, but nowhere are they separated from each other; the iron is entirely penetrated by the fire, but iron and fire were originally two. He who denies this last, and obstinately refuses to recognise in Jesus anything more than man, must also admit that the Jews with justice, or at most only in consequence of a fatal misunderstanding, condemned the Lord to death; but, at the same time, that there is now no longer the slightest reason for maintaining the ancient wall of separation between Jew and Christian. He, on the contrary, who here accepts with us the fact of something Supranatural, in whatever way

[24] Luke iii. 38.

this has entered into personal relation with the merely natural, will also be obliged to admit that henceforth the miraculous in this history ceases to be wholly incomprehensible or absolutely inconceivable. If we measure the Christ according to a merely empirical standard, every miracle must become a stone of stumbling to us, and we shall not rest until at any price this stone is removed out of our way. If we regard Him, on the other hand, as the One in whom the Divine and the human are united, as in no one before or after Him; no miracle wrought by Him, or of which He was the subject,—provided it be duly proved,—need hinder us from belief in Him who is Himself the miracle of all miracles, the glorious Sun, of which the various miraculous deeds are simply the beamings forth, in a certain sense natural.

5. For the explaining and confirmation of that which has been said, we make the trial with the first particular which we confess concerning the incarnate Son of God: "Conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary." Who does not know to what opposition this article has at all times given rise? Naturally. If one places himself at the Naturalistic standpoint, and takes his start from the philosophic principle, *Nemo inter nos emineat*, nothing is easier than to set up, in connection with the Gospel accounts of the nativity, demands and questions with which they no longer correspond; and, so soon as this becomes apparent, to inscribe those accounts themselves in the list of fictions. But how entirely different the matter becomes, so soon as we take as our torch in the darkness the word of Jesus Himself, "Ye are from beneath, I am from above," and regard this miraculous beginning of life in the light which falls from this centre, as upon all that follows, so also upon all that precedes it. That which appears in itself incredible, becomes thus reasonable—yea, internally probable and worthy of God, in its connection with this organic whole. Naturally the historic truth of the miraculous fact in question is in itself by no means decided by this observation—we shall later return to it;—but yet there has been pointed out, by way of anticipation, the only standpoint which we can take, if we would hope to succeed in this demonstration itself. We may, in fact, add to this that, if in reality the miraculous beginning of life can be satisfactorily defended historically, not only is the suprahuman descent of the Lord thereby confirmed, but also His spotless purity (§ xciii.) is, at least to a certain extent, explained. For when we observe how, on the one hand, all human beings born in the ordinary way, are at the same time defiled with sin; and, on the other hand, how the only Sinless One with whom we are acquainted, received a beginning of life in an extraordinary way, then, indeed, we are compelled to think in this case of a direct connection between the one and the other, and from the *post hoc* to reason to the *propter hoc*. If also it seems impossible to define the precise *nature* of this connection, this does not in itself justify the scouting of the existence thereof as absurd. Enough, if Christ was really the man from heaven, destined and sent to become the Head of a new humanity, then there is certainly nothing incredible, from a Theistic standpoint, in His entering in an extraordinary manner into the sphere of life on earth, and in consequence thereof having remained free from the dominating power of the flesh, which reveals itself in connection with all

the natural descendants of the first Adam. Moreover, the miraculous beginning of life becomes now, no enigmatical fact in itself, but simply a single link in the long chain of miracles, which is inserted exactly at the proper place—yea, precisely the thoroughly ordinary and every-day occurrence would *here* be less credible for us than the miraculous. Yet this miracle also calls forth questions from which a truly rational faith cannot withdraw itself. The recognition of the Suprahuman in Christ naturally leads to reverent examination as to His nature as God-man.

Compare, in addition to the literature mentioned in the former sections, G. THOMASIUS, *Christi Person und Werk* (1855); M. NICOLAS, *La Divinité de J. C., démonstration nouvelle*, etc. (1864); J. C. DIEHL, *Jezus Christus, meer dan Mensch* (1870); J. J. VAN OOSTERZEE, *De Christus en zijne plaats*, in the publication *Voor Kerk en Theol.* (1871), pp. 1—54, [translated in the *Preacher's Lantern*, Aug.—Oct., 1873]. On the miraculous beginning of the Lord's life in itself, our Diss. Theol. *De Jesu, e virgine Mariâ nato* (1840), and our *Leven van Jezus*, i., p. 324, *sqq.;* as also W. BEYSCHLAG, *Ueber die Bedeutung des Wunders im Christenth.* (1862).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Sense and demonstrative force of the principal *loca probantia.*—Critical examination of the places in the Scriptures of the New Testament, in which the name of *God* is given to the Son of God.—The significance of the name Son of Man.—The precise connection between the names Christ and Son of God.—Is the conception of two natures in the one person of the Lord truly based upon the teaching of the Gospels?—In what relation does the suprahuman descent of the Lord stand to His absolute sinlessness?

SECTION XCV.—HIS THEANTHROPIC RANK.

The human and the Divine nature exist in the person of the Redeemer by no means only outwardly together, or parallel to each other, but so intimately united that this personality is as little merely human as exclusively Divine, but is and remains to all eternity, Divine-human. The manner of this union is for our finite understanding incomprehensible; but its conceivableness may be justified as well theologically as anthropologically, its reality is satisfactorily vouched for, and its significance for the Christian faith and life so great, that if this be disavowed, the just appreciation of the work of the Lord becomes absolutely impossible.

If hitherto we have devoted attention separately to the Divine *and* the human in Christ, now the union of the two must be the object of our special investigation. The twofold question here applies, how—in the light of the Gospel—we have to *conceive* of the *nature* of this union, and how we have to *judge* of the *fact* of this union.

I. 1. The *nature* of the union here referred to, consists in Christ's being not simply true and holy Man, but also from all eternity the sharer of God's nature and majesty, Divine and human alike, in the unity of the person and self-consciousness. Since the time of Origen, therefore, He has borne, in ecclesiastical terminology, the name of God-man (Θεάνθρωπος), a word which, no doubt, like every other, admits of misunderstanding, but which has long ago established itself, and which certainly not less merits its adoption than the well-known words, Providence, Trinity, Person, or Nature (οὐσία). According to the constant teaching of the Gospel, our Lord was already, before His incarnation, and He remains afterwards—of which we shall later have to treat more particularly—God's own, only-begotten Son. But, by His appearing in the flesh, this Son of God becomes that which He was not by nature, and a personality is brought into existence, in which the Divine just as little exists and appears without the human, as the human without the Divine. Both natures, although originally by no means identical, become, in consequence of this personal union, henceforth inseparably connected together. This unity is consequently no ideal, but a real one; no merely moral, but a natural one; no mechanical unity, but a spiritual and living one. Its beginning dates from the beginning of the incarnation: once begun, it ceases not a single moment during the whole life of the God-man on earth—yea, it continues unchangeably, now and for ever. Once voluntarily become *God-man*, He remains so world without end; and in our nature lives glorified at the right hand of God.[1] He is in God, and God in Him, as in no one else; but, nevertheless, His human nature is and remains in truth consubstantial with ours.

2. If we seek to penetrate somewhat more deeply into this mystery of Godliness, it becomes at once apparent, as a matter of fact, that the existence of this union must be duly distinguished from the calling forth of the consciousness thereof. This latter can, from the nature of the case, be developed only by slow gradations; and it is no small proof of the *specific* difference between the Apocryphal and the Canonical Gospels, that, while these last speak of an increase in wisdom,[2] the former, on the other hand, represent the child Jesus as speaking undisguisedly and in dogmatic form of His Divine nature, and thus in principle deny His true humanity. If we hold firmly to this last, we must believe that the fact of this union is as old as the first beginning of the life of the Lord, while the consciousness thereof we first hear Him clearly express, after He has attained to the full maturity of manhood.

3. To God's incarnate Son must accordingly be ascribed but *one* consciousness, and that, of the God-man. To the question, who is the *I* who presents himself as speaking in the Gospel? we cannot thus reply, Only the man Jesus, or, Only the Son of God; but, The God-man in undivided personality. Hence also the Lord never says, "I and the Logos," or "I and the Son, are one;" but "I and the Father are one;" for this *I* is the Son Himself, who is inseparably one with Jesus of Nazareth. It is the same personality which says, "Before Abraham was, I am," and, "Of that

[1] Ephes. ii. 6; Heb. iv. 14, 15.

[2] Luke ii. 40—52.

day and that hour knoweth no man, neither the Son;" which prays, "Let this cup pass from me," and, "Father, glorify Thy Son." Nowhere is there anything to lead us to conceive of the original difference between the Divine and human, as an opposition subjectively irreconcilable; nowhere ground for supposing a twofold self-consciousness, in consequence of which the Lord may, for instance, have willed and known something as to His Divine nature, which He did not as to His human, or *vice versâ*. He who speaks in the fourth Gospel, as well as in the Synoptics, is God's incarnate Son, in whose self-consciousness all the points of the original antithesis are synthetically combined, and at every moment cover each other.

4. With the recognition of the fact expressed by this consciousness, nothing whatever may be detracted, either from the truly Divine, or the truly human side of this personality. By the alternative, countless times set up—either truly God, but then also no real man; or, truly man, but then also not really God—the knot is not untied, but simply hewn through. A king's son who voluntarily lives and dies as a bond-servant somewhere in his father's kingdom, remains none the less, both in reality and in his own consciousness, the king's son that he was before. This is precisely the great problem for Christian thought, "how"—in the language of Martensen—"the fulness of the Godhead was contained within the circle of the humanity," without that which was essential to either of the two factors, of which this peerless whole was formed, being sacrificed.

5. Each in itself being fully recognised, the two natures in Christ must in conception be just as little separated from each other, as confounded with each other. The history of this article (§ xcvi.) will very soon make manifest how countless many times shipwreck has been made on one of these two rocks. As opposed to this double onesidedness the position is at once to be clearly assumed that *the Son of God voluntarily took up the human nature into the unity of His being, and thus also of His self-consciousness*. Nowhere does the Gospel teach us that the Son of God—with reverence be it said—was changed into a mere human individual, so that the Divine nature was, as it were, wholly sunk in the human; but only that the Son of God came upon earth in the true human nature. But just as little does it teach, that the man Jesus rose, by inner force of mind or will, to the consciousness that in Him, more than in any one else, the Godhead personally lived and worked. The Scripture proclaims no apotheosis of the man, but the incarnation of the Logos; and presents Jesus to us, not as a son of Adam who is developed into God-likeness, but as the Son of God, who became what He was not before, and nevertheless remains the one He is. The union of the Divine and human in Him is not the result, but the starting-point, of the life and works of Jesus upon earth. "He resolves," says Thomasius, "to have His Divine nature only in unity with the human."

6. The Son of God, become truly man, in this condition reveals also His Divine attributes only in a human, that is to say, relative and finite, manner. The personal possession of these attributes remains unchanged, just as really as He remains the Logos; but the manifestation and exercise thereof is to a great extent modified, when He who was in the form of God, in the incarnation voluntarily *divested* Himself of that which belonged

to Him.[3] In a very sound sense can we thus speak of the self-limitation of the eternal Logos, in consequence of which He, once become man, manifests His glory upon earth, not in an absolute and adequate form, but in a relative and approximate one. The Son of God in Himself was undoubtedly omniscient and omnipotent;[4] but the incarnate Son of God shows clearly enough that He does not, in point of fact, know every contingent circumstance,[5] and that He is limited in a peculiar manner, not indeed in the possession of that miraculous power, but yet in the employment thereof.

7. In the person of the Lord we see all the properties and activities of the two natures so intimately united together, that we can without difficulty, in harmony with the language of Scripture, ascribe to either nature that which, taken strictly, applies only to the other. There is therefore no need for surprise when we read that the *Lord* of glory was *crucified*, that the *blood* of the *Son of God* cleanses from sins, etc. By virtue of the law of innermost communion the one nature necessarily shares in that which is done or suffered by the other. Not that, in common with the Lutheran Church, we have on that account to hold that the one nature has communicated, and as it were transferred, its properties to the other—*communicatio idiomatum*. For in its consistent development this conception must inevitably lead to Eutychianism, and is therefore rightly rejected in the Reformed Confession.[6] One would in this way arrive at the conclusion that Christ is —to use the words of Calvin—"something made up of a mixture of God and man." But thus much is to be maintained, that the one nature does nothing and omits nothing, suffers nothing and enjoys nothing, without the other, and that consequently the humanity of Christ is just as little ever forsaken by His Godhead, as the humanity can itself become separated from the Divinity. That which forms the personality is and remains in this case the Son of God, uniting Himself not to a single human individuality which could have existed even without Him, but to the human nature which He voluntarily assumes; and indeed with this result, that now in the historical human person of Jesus, the Son of Mary, at the same time "the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily." "In such wise," says Calvin, "was it meet that the Son of God should *become* to us Immanuel, that by a mutual union His Divinity and the nature of *man* should be blended together."[7] But where this miracle has once taken place, there—precisely in consequence of this miracle—there can be predicated of the whole person of the Lord that which, strictly taken, properly applies either to His original nature, or to His adopted nature alone.

8. This, however, must least of all be overlooked, that the Logos, even by His voluntary self-humiliation, and all that must necessarily follow from it, ceased not for a single moment to be that which He was in His eternal nature and essence. God's incarnate Son remains—and, as such, is con-

[3] ἐκένωσεν, Phil. ii. 7.
[4] John v. 19—21.
[5] Mark vii. 24; xi. 13; John xi. 34.
[6] *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xviii., xix.; *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 48.
[7] Ita filium Dei nobis Immanuel *fieri* oportuit, ut mutuâ conjunctione ejus divinitas et *hominum* (in the plural) natura inter se coalescerent.

scious of being—unchangeably one with the Father, but at the same time originally and abidingly distinguished from other men. This last is apparent even from the fact that, in all the four Gospels, He constantly speaks of *His* God and *His* Father, in distinction from that of His disciples; and is therefore justly placed emphatically in the foreground in the Church's confession.[8] But to the former we point yet once more, in controverting the idea not seldom met with, by which the relation of the Son of God to the whole Divine nature is represented as being, at least in some measure, annihilated, or limited by His coming in the flesh. The popular-plastic mode of speaking of Him, as having "*left* His throne and kingdom," although intelligible enough in a scriptural sense, cannot be literally understood, and has, accordingly, been rejected by such men as Origen, Athanasius, Augustine, Calvin, and Beza.[9] The Lord also, when upon earth, calls Himself the Son of Man, who *is* in heaven; and declares not simply "all Mine is Thine," but also "all Thine is Mine."[10] Yet it remains here the *magnum mysterium*, that He who continues to live and work as God's own Son should in such wise unite Himself to the nature of men, that the human does not become any the less human, nor the Divine cease to be Divine, and the truly Theanthropic nature appears as the higher harmony of the two.

II. 1. When we ask how this matchless fact is to be *judged of*, we begin by readily making the confession that the *manner* of this union is, from the nature of the case, absolutely incomprehensible. In our anti-dogmatic age we would purposely omit any acute doctrinal definitions, and would advance no single step farther than can be legitimately adduced from solid data. And yet this little is enough to remind us of the words of the Lord in Matt. xi. 27, and to make us feel that the greatest miracle is at the same time the deepest mystery of love. Recourse has here been had to figures taken, *e.g.*, from iron heated through with fire, or two circles of different circumference, but which meet in the same centre; and by this means the matter is perhaps to some extent brought within the province of the imagination, but for our apprehension it remains yet more inaccessible than, for instance, the question as to the real connection between our own body and soul. We cannot, indeed, be surprised at this obscurity, nor need it at all hinder us from a continued reverent examination of the revealed mystery. But we may well remind each other that the certainty of the fact will not be found ultimately to depend on its being fully explicable, and to recal the saying of Melancthon, that "the knowledge of Christ is the practical knowledge of the blessings He brings, and not, as the Schoolmen say, a poring over His *natures* and the manner of His incarnation."[11] The highest miracle in the world's history will assuredly be the last of all to be understood.

2. Nevertheless, to some extent the fact can reasonably be explained,

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[8] *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 33.

[9] According to the *Netherlands Confession* also (Art. xix.) the Divine nature continued, after the incarnation, to "fill heaven and earth."

[10] John iii. 13; xvii. 10a.

[11] Hoc est Christum cognoscere, ejus beneficia cognoscere, non quod isti (Scholastici) dicunt, ejus naturas et modos incarnationis intueri.

as well upon theological as upon anthropological grounds. God is love; love strives after personal, intimate union with that which above all things it regards with affection, and it is in the nature of things that the highest love should condescend as deeply as possible.[12] On the other hand, man is in his origin of Divine descent, and even by sin has not ceased to stand to Him in the closest relation. The Logos becomes not a stone, a plant, or an animal—that were as inconceivable as a commingling of oil with water, of fire with ice—but man, *i.e.*, a being related to God, at once rational and moral. He, God's original image, appears in that nature which once was created, not only after His likeness, but also for Him; the extremes here meet, but at the same time are related to each other. Certainly, he who creates as great a distance as possible between God and man, will be only too ready to say with Luther: "Es ist zehnmal leichter, dass ein Mensch ein Esel, als dass Gott ein Mensch würde." But it becomes another matter when one seeks points of contact, and observes that mankind was never destined to stand wholly alone; but, on the contrary, to become God's dwelling and temple, and even in this way to attain to its ideal. The two most essential attributes of personality, self-consciousness and freedom, which are perfect in God, exist relatively in man, and *natura humana capax divinæ*.[13] No wonder that even in heathen Mythology we discover so often a dim sense of this glorious truth; these aspirations are the broken rays of that sun which has risen unclouded in the Gospel. For,

3. The reality of the miraculous fact itself to which we refer is for the Church of Christ sufficiently established by the unequivocal testimony of the Lord Himself and His Apostles, but is moreover confirmed for intelligent faith by a twofold observation. *First*, it is proved that the idea of a personal incarnation of God is nowhere met with in a perfectly pure form, either among the Heathen, or in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, but is the fruit of a Christian soil alone. This phenomenon appears to be inexplicable, if it is not underlain by an historical fact, in which the idea has its root, and of which it will afford the explanation.[14] But, *in the second place*, in the words, the deeds, and the experiences of the Lord, we meet with oppositions so extremely surprising, that they remain absolutely incomprehensible for us, unless we find the key thereto in the words of the Christian Father, "God comes down to us, that we may rise to Him"—*descendit Deus, ut nos assurgamus*. Only when we regard Him as God-man, does all present itself before our eye in a light which astonishes us indeed, but at the same time gives us satisfaction. The truth of Christlieb's words becomes ever afresh apparent, "He who in his delineation of the person of Christ—in whom the Divine and the human form such an inseparable whole—begins by excluding the Divine factor, cannot prove entirely just in his estimate even of the human side in Christ." Thus ultimately even that which is most difficult to comprehend, becomes again the most probable, nay, the most highly rational.

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[12] Ps. cxiii. 5, 6.

[13] "Human nature (is) capable of receiving the Divine." Compare John xvii. 20—22; 2 Pet. i. 4.

[14] Compare DORNER, *l. c.*, p. 4, *sqq.*

4. To hold immovably fast to this miraculous fact on such grounds is of supreme importance for Christian faith and life. He who rejects this Christ, retains only a Jesus of the imagination, and he that has not the Son, has not the Father also. The question here raised is not one of empty abstraction, nor a delusive play upon words. Only where Christ is acknowledged as the God-man, does the love of the Father,[15] the grace of the Son,[16] and the glory of the Gospel[17] beam forth to us in all its lustre. This is, properly speaking, the kernel and essence of the Gospel; the Son of God become man, in order that men may become the children of God. In this very fact do we see the highest expectation of antiquity crowned, the deepest necessity of mankind satisfied, the most glorious revelation of the Godhead vouchsafed. What becomes of all this so soon as Christ is deprived of the crown of His Divine dignity? Only when we see Him occupy this *rank* do we see Him fully qualified for His *mission* [that which He is designed to be], of which we shall soon have to speak. But before this, a glance at the history of the doctrine, which has just occupied us.

Compare, in addition to the literature already given, our *Christologie*, iii., pp. 173—245; and L. SCHOEBERLEIN, *Die Einheit des göttl. und menschl. in Jesu Christo*, in the *Jahrb. für deutsche Theol.* (1871), iii., pp. 459—501.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Explanation of Matt. xi. 27, as compared with Luke x. 22.—What is the difference between Jesus Christ and the most distinguished of the prophets inspired by the Spirit of God?—In what way have we to conceive of the Divine-human consciousness of the Lord?—Are there sufficient grounds to justify us in believing that this consciousness had already attained full maturity and distinctness at the beginning of His public life?—Significance of the maxim, *natura humana capax divinæ*.—Further elucidation and defence of the idea of the self-limitation of the Logos.—What is there against the supposition of His having "left" the throne of the Universe?—What rocks are especially to be avoided in the treatment of the Christologic problem for the Church?

SECTION XCVI.—THE CHURCH'S INTERPRETATION OF THIS DOCTRINE.

The Church's conception of the personality of the God-man must of course be constantly varying, and in many respects defective. Yet is the history of this doctrine so far from being a mere accidental aggregate of opinions often contradictory, that on the contrary it ever presses forward with logical necessity. Under increasing conflict, the Christian Church brings the different sides of

[15] John iii. 16. [16] 2 Cor. viii. 9. [17] 1 Cor. ii. 9.

this great problem, one after another, into prominence, and rests not until ever afresh the place of honour is assured, which the Gospel ascribes to the God-man. That Gospel unceasingly invites to Christologic investigation; but no result, in which in principle the claim of one of the two factors is not duly recognised, can permanently stand the test of Christian thought.

1. As with regard to every dogma, so especially for the problem of Christology, is the history of the development of doctrine of paramount interest. It not merely gives unequivocal testimony to the importance attached in almost every age to this subject above every other, but it makes us acquainted with the attempts of the Christian spirit—attempts which cannot but command our respect—to penetrate as far as possible, by the light of the Gospel, into this depth of God. On the other hand, it shows us, in a number of warning examples, how the loftiest mountain-heights for human thought border on the most perilous abysses. Only comparatively seldom do we see the full truth recognised in its purity, and defined with the desired accuracy; the Christology of the Church stands to that of the New Testament, as the much polluted stream to the pure fountain-head. Yet far more is here manifested, than a play of all kinds of opposite opinions, accidentally brought together. It becomes apparent, on the contrary, that the Christian gnosis—under the impulse, too, of events and circumstances—has made the two members of the awful synthesis, which is expressed in the idea of the God-man, one after the other the object of reverential investigation. If we briefly review this examination in the *four* different periods into which it may conveniently be divided, we shall learn to recognise therein something else than an agglomeration of disconnected ideas.

2. During the *first* period, of which the Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) forms the close, we see *an unceasing conflict waged, first on each of the two natures in Christ, and then—after both have been maintained—also on the manner of the union of the two.* From the hand of the Apostles the Church has received in trust the confession of the Son of God, manifested in human flesh, but from the beginning she has had to defend this confession against hostile attacks. The true human nature was denied by the Docetæ (§ xcii.); and the Divine by the Judaistic heretics (Ebionites and Nazarenes), the Alogi (Theodotus and Artemon), and the Monarchians properly so called (Praxeas, Noëtus, and Beryllus of Bostra). As against both, the Church confesses that Christ was *truly* man, but at the same time that He was *more* than man. It is true this dogma is not at first sharply and distinctly formulated—in the struggle for life which she must at first maintain against her persecutors, she is impelled, especially in her own defence, to other points—but still it is absolutely unproved, yea, inconceivable, that what is properly speaking the essential contents of her Christologic confession during and after the fourth century, was other than in the three preceding ones. Even with Justin Martyr, Christ is the λόγος ἀνδρωθείς; according to Clemens Romanus, He [illegible] τὸ σκῆπτρον τῆς μεγαλω-

σύνης τοῦ Θεοῦ, personally existing before His coming into the world; according to Irenæus, "*incarnatus et homo factus;*" and while the significance ascribed by the Alexandrine School to the doctrine of the Logos is universally known, more distinctly than any of his predecessors does Origen define the Eternal Generation of the Son, from which however he seeks to remove as widely as possible all idea of physical emanation; and he describes the subordination of the Son to the Father in such wise, that every conception of anything of the nature of the creature is thereby excluded. It is true this Subordinationism is avoided by the Sabellians and Paul of Samosata, but in a manner whereby the proper personality of the Son is necessarily sacrificed; and in this last, especially, it is evident that the Christian consciousness is interested. No wonder that the Church, in the conflict against Arianism, not only rejects every theory according to which the Son is regarded as κτίσμα, but also protests with all earnestness against the substitution of the Logos for the human ψυχή of the Lord. At Nicæa, A.D. 325, the confession of the Homo-ousia of the Son with the Father, but also of the perfection of His human nature, is the result of the conflict; and when, shortly after, Apollinaris seeks to solve the problem by the presentment that in the person of the Lord the Logos had taken the place of the human reason (πνεῦμα),[1] his doctrine was—under the influence of Athanasius and the two Gregories—condemned by the Church as heretical, at Constantinople, A.D. 381.

Only now, when each of the two natures had been acknowledged in its full reality, came the time for considering the question as to the nature and manner of the *union* of the two. The Christian Fathers of the first three centuries either had not expressed themselves at all on this mystery, or had done so only insufficiently. Now, however, when the two terms of the opposition have been maintained, the necessity for a sharper definition of doctrines is at once felt. Two dangers were imminent: the two natures might either be too sharply separated the one from the other, or they might be too much confounded together; and each of these mistakes was actually committed—the former more especially in the school of Antioch, the latter in that of Alexandria. Following in the footsteps of Diodorus of Tarsus and Theodorus of Mopsuestia, Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, enters the lists, in 428, against the name of Θεοτόκος, which he hears given by his friend the Presbyter Anastasius to the Virgin Mary, and for which he wished the name of Θεοδόχος, or Χριστοτόκος, to be substituted. He recognised, indeed, each of the two natures of Christ separately; but supposed that there existed between the two simply a more external, moral union—ἀσύγχυτος συνάφεια—like that between the Temple and Him who is worshipped therein. Further, he confessed, *divido naturas, sed conjungo reverentiam.* That, however, was not enough for Cyril of Alexandria, who first contradicted, and afterwards violently opposed him, as rending asunder the Divine and human in Christ; very soon both hurled their anathemas at each other, since Cyril required nothing less than a perfect union, φυσικὴ ἕνωσις, of the two natures. At the Synod of Ephesus, A.D. 431,

[1] [Τὸ δὴ πνεῦμα, τοῦτ' ἔστι τὸν νοῦν, θεὸν ἔχων ὁ Χριστὸς, μετὰ ψυχῆς καὶ σώματος, εἰκότως ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ λέγεται, are his words.—*Greg. Nyss. contra Apoll.*, 9.]

Nestorius was condemned and banished († 439) without, however, the conflict being on that account brought to an end.—For only now does the other side of the opposition begin to manifest itself in full force. Cyril's line of thought is pursued by Eutyches, Archimandrite in Constantinople, who expressly asserts, that after this union we can only speak of *one* nature in Christ, and thereby becomes the champion of a Monophysite error which lasted for centuries. With his fellow-champion, Dioscurus. he succeeds so far as to obtain for his error—at the so-called Synod of Robbers at Ephesus, in 449—a brief triumph, brought about by violence, but destined to be only the prelude of a decisive defeat. The Roman bishop, Leo Magnus, in a letter to Flavianus, Bishop of Constantinople, lays down the middle terms between the two extremes. The Council of Chalcedon, A.D. 451, maintains the unity of the person with the distinction of the two natures; and decrees—in opposition to Eutyches—that the unity is ἀσυγχύτως and ἀτρέπτως, but also —in opposition to Nestorius—that it is ἀχωρίστως and ἀδιαιρέτως [without confusion and without change; but also without the possibility of division or separation]. While Nestorius had taught a mechanical union of the two natures, and Eutyches a magical one, the formula now adopted avoids both extremes, and obtains henceforth the force of a symbol, without, however, its showing itself sufficient to put an end for ever to all further controversy on this point.

3. A *second* period now opens, extending from Chalcedon to the age of the Reformation. Even where the existence, as a fact, of the two natures and their inseparable union was acknowledged, the danger yet remained of laying an excessive stress on the one nature at the expense of the other; and very speedily it became apparent how easily one runs the risk of shipwreck, either upon Scylla or upon Charybdis. Until the time of the Reformation, we see *the Divine nature constantly dwelt on above, and even at the expense of, the human.* This became at once apparent in the rise and progress of *Theopaschitism*, which, as represented by Peter the Fuller at Antioch, taught that one of the persons of the Holy Trinity was crucified; a proposition which, favoured by the Emperor Justinian, was admitted as orthodox by the fifth Œcumenical Synod, A.D. 553, and obtained for the Monophysite tendency of thought a temporary ascendancy. In the sect of the so-called *Aphthartodocetæ*, who asserted that the Lord had possessed on earth an incorruptible body, there was manifested the same one-sidedness; and it was under the influence of this sect that absolute omniscience during His earthly life was ascribed to Him, so that the opinion of the *Agnoetæ* who —on the authority of Mark xiii. 32—maintained the opposite, was rejected as a dangerous heresy.—Very soon we see, in the seventh century, a fundamentally Monophysite view entertained by the *Monothelites*, who accept the formula of the Emperor Heraclius, that in Christ only one Divine-human will (μία Θεανδρικὴ ἐνέργεια) was found, and who also meet with approval on the part of Pope Honorius; but, in return, must bear the reproach addressed to them by Sophronius, that they were in opposition to the Council of Chalcedon, consistency with which enjoined not Monothelitism, but Duothelitism (A.D. 635). In fact, we see the doctrine of two wills and energies—ἐνεργείαι—proclaimed as the doctrine of the Church, by the sixth Œcumenical Council, known as the Constantinopolitan, or first

Trullan Council (A.D. 680), in such wise, however, that the human will was conceived of as constantly subordinate to the Divine; a view of the latter, in turn, in which it became almost impossible to keep free from all Docetic leaven. It is certainly remarkable that the Reformers looked upon the decrees of this Council as not being valid; but, at the same time, it becomes perfectly clear that the theological movement after the Council of Chalcedon was more retrogressive than progressive, and also that a decisive preponderance was ascribed to the Divine nature over the human. In the *Adoptianist* controversy (represented by Elipandus of Toledo and Felix of Urgella) we meet with the attempt to vindicate for the human nature a certain independence, even at the risk of arriving at a renewed Nestorianism. But their statement that Christ, as to His human nature, was the Son of God only by adoption (*nuncupatio*), was looked on as imperilling the purity of Christian doctrine, and was condemned at the Council of Frankfort (A.D. 794). On the other hand, we see orthodoxy developed a step farther in this domain by John Damascenus (A.D. 753), who regards the Divine nature in Christ as that which more especially forms His personality, who calls attention to the original impersonality of the human nature assumed by the Son of God, and seeks to render comprehensible the relation between this and the Divine nature, by the supposition of a certain communication of properties (τρόπος ἀντιδόσεως), and the penetration of the one nature by the other (περιχώρησις). It is evident that, if aught is detracted from either of the two natures, it is certainly not from the Divine; and just as little would, in later times, the opinion of Peter Lombard, that the Son of God had *become* nothing in the Incarnation—since God is unchangeable—ever have been condemned as *Nihilianism*, and have been understood in the sense that He had become absolutely *nothing*, if the due value had been in reality attached to the *humanity* of Christ. It is true, Scholasticism sought, while eschewing the opinion thus erroneously imputed to Lombard, to defend in different ways the position that Christ, even as man, was not merely *something*, but also some one (*aliquis homo*); but, throughout, we see in the Christologic consciousness of this period, rather the human, as it were, absorbed and lost in the Divine, than the Divine recognised and glorified in the truly human.

4. The very opposite—naturally at all times with numerous exceptions—do we discover in the *third* period, extending from the Reformation to the close of the last century. Henceforth we see an *increased importance attached to the truly human; at first with the recognition of the Divine nature of the Redeemer, and later even with the disavowal and denial of the same.* If at first this controversy, which had slumbered for a considerable time, was allowed to sleep on, it was only because very different questions from these were the questions of the hour. Men rested satisfied, from a conviction of its scripturalness, with the doctrine proclaimed by the great General Councils; while not only Melancthon, but Calvin also, uttered a warning against all sophistical reasonings. "A practical knowledge," says the latter, "is, without doubt, more sure and solid than any idle speculation whatever." Only when the controversy about the Lord's Supper had broken out, was the necessity for a renewed dogmatico-Christologic examination perceived; and, however great the gulf which very soon separated the Lutheran from

the Reformed Church, on both sides first the reality and then the high value of the humanity of Christ was advocated with a warmth which had perhaps never been displayed on this subject before. Even the Lutheran doctrine of the communication of the properties of the one nature to the other—*communicatio idiomatum*—may be regarded, as well as from other points of view, as a powerful exaltation and glorifying of the humanity of Christ. Now, indeed, was ascribed to this, in union with the Divine, ubiquity, omnipotence, omniscience, etc., and the right thereto defended by an appeal to the different *propositiones* or *prædicationes idiomaticæ* in Holy Scripture, *i.e.*, those places in which either the properties of one or the other nature are transferred to the whole person (*genus idiomaticum*); or redeeming acts, wrought by the whole Christ, are ascribed only to one nature (*genus apotelesmaticum*); or directly Divine attributes are ascribed only to the human nature (*genus majestaticum*). The Reformed Theology, on the other hand, held such an actual *communicatio idiomatum* to be inconceivable, and asserted that the passages of Scripture which seemed to favour it, were to be regarded as an oratorical figure, an Allœosis, which by Luther on his side was termed a "Devil's mask," by which the true Christ was inevitably concealed. The most that Calvin could admit was that to the *person* of Christ must be ascribed all the properties of both natures, most closely united; but an actual transference of the properties of the Divine *nature* to the human, rightly appeared to him inconceivable, without an annihilation in principle of all that constitutes the essence of the latter. No wonder that the accusation of Nestorianism, brought on the Lutheran side against the Swiss Reformers and those who thought with them, was met on the side of the latter by the charge of Eutychianism in return.

In the course of time we see the value attached to the human nature of the Lord manifesting itself even in forms reputed heretical. Michael Servetus sees in Christ only the man entirely taken possession of by God; and, beyond this, rejects the supposition of two natures as an unbiblical Scholasticism. A. Osiander regards Him as the Divine ideal of humanity, only imperfectly realised in Adam, and asserts that only a purely ideal pre-existence must be ascribed to Him. Caspar Schwenkfeld speaks of the flesh of Christ as being made wholly Divine and glorified, without being deterred by the reproach of Eutychianism loudly raised against him. Some Mystics, such as Weigel, Poiret, and others, begin even to speak of a heavenly humanity of the pre-existing Christ. In opposition to this Rationalism lifts its head in the Socinian Christologians, to a certain extent also in some of the Arminian. While these last are not entirely free from a refined form of Arianism, the former see in the Lord only the true and holy man, called Son of God on account of His miraculous birth, who before, and now and then during, His public life had ascended to heaven, there to receive heavenly revelation—in consequence of which He is called the Logos—and who was bodily raised, and exalted to be Head of the Church. In the orthodox Church the Scholasticism of the seventeenth century is followed here too by a Liberalism rapidly sinking into the Indifferentism of the eighteenth; and while the sharpest doctrinal definitions are laid down as to the relation between Divine and human, the scale begins to incline more and more in favour of the human nature of the Lord at first

with the weakening, and afterwards with the denial, of the Divine. Under the influence of the prevailing Philosophy, Christology passes, as it were over the bridge of Arianism, back to the standpoint of Ebionitism, and Christ is now seldom even recognised as the ideal man. If on some sides, as by Zinzendorf, Lavater, Hamann, and others, the Godhead of Christ is confessed; on the other hand, the metaphysical and speculative element in Christology is constantly more and more driven into the background, and in place thereof the highest value is attached to the historical and practical side of the appearing of Christ. What lies beyond this, Supranaturalism still firmly holds to, but usually more out of reverence for the letter of Scripture than out of any particular sympathy with the subject itself; while Rationalism, on the other hand, degenerates more and more into the most decided Naturalism. The representatives of this change are the author of the Wolfenbüttel fragments, Reimarus, Bahrdt, Venturini, etc. In place of the distinction between the Divine and human in Christ, now arises that between the historical and the ideal in Him. Unfortunately these two become constantly more opposed to each other, and the former is regarded as an unreal, even excessively æsthetical, veil of high religious ideas. Thus Kant, for instance, looked upon the history of Christ as the history of all time, and belief in the Son of God as that of the moral-minded man in himself.

5. Happily, since the beginning of the present century, wee see a *fourth* and still continuing period begin, definitely characterised by *the effort to render, as far as possible, full justice as well to the Divine as to the human in Christ; and more deeply to penetrate and duly to defend the unity of the two.* On the philosophic side, we see this attempted especially by Schelling, Hegel, and Franz von Baader; on the theological, by Schleiermacher and those Theologians who received from him "the impulse to an everlasting movement." It is true Schleiermacher deduced his idea of Christ, not from the teaching of Scripture or of the Church, but from the facts belonging to the experience of the Christian life; but yet, on the ground of this last, he sees in Him a personality in which, as in no one else, the Divine and human is united, so that He, filled with the highest consciousness of God, remains the ideal of moral perfection. In a nearly similar sense Hase declared that the Divine nature of the Lord was, "in the serious sense of science, nothing but His unclouded piety." But parallel with and after them there were not wanting manifold endeavours to press a step further into this sanctuary. The truth of the Divine nature of the Lord was especially defended by Nitzsch, Martensen, Sartorius, and others; the truth and purity of the human, by Ullmann and Dorner. The mystery of the union of the two has been elucidated—with more or less of adherence to the doctrine of the Church—on the Lutheran side, by Philippi, Liebner, Thomasius, Hofmann, Kahnis; on the Reformed, above all by Lange and Ebrard, who notably strive to cleanse the plant of this dogma from the spurious growth of Scholasticism. "It ought," says the latter, "to be esteemed the most important task of the Theology of our time to rectify the doctrine of the God-man, *i.e.*, to bring it back to the Biblical and Patristic purity and clearness of conception." That side by side with this effort, old errors also now and then find new advocates and representatives, is certainly to be expected. The Supranaturalistic Christology of the pre-

sent day has its Arians and its Apollinarists, as well as that of the fourth century. Even the danger of (an anthropo-centric) maintenance and emphasising of the human nature of the Lord, in connection with which His Divine nature is no longer duly recognised, is on this side, also, by no means imaginary. On the whole, however, one may say that the Modern Supranaturalism of our age strives, more or less successfully, by a deeper apprehension of the doctrine of the Kenôsis (Philipp. ii. 7) to present the person of Christ in such wise that—without anything being detracted from His true Godhead—the reality of His incarnation is accepted in all its consequences, and the essential truth of the scriptural Subordinationism is recognised, without falling upon the rock of Arian idolatry of the creature. In this way it seeks at the same time to maintain the Theanthropic character of the Lord against all attacks of modern Unitarianism and Naturalism.

The growing necessity for this last is a matter of ignorance for no one who has attentively observed the history of the controversy for some forty years past. The speculative reconstruction of Christology on the left side of the Hegelian school has resulted in Strauss, Bruno Bauer, and Feuerbach; the Naturalistic tendency of thought celebrated its triumph in Renan, Réville, etc. The account of this controversy in its details is not in place here; but it must not pass unobserved that, on the last-named line, as against many who ever sink more deeply, others seem impelled in a better direction, and endeavour, from their so-called Modern standpoint, to rise to the conception of a truly sinless Christ, who has been raised from the dead, and whose perfect ideality is provable upon strictly historic grounds. So Keim, Beyschlag, the author of *Ecce Homo*, and others. To what extent this more noble Modernism may become for some a bridge to the believing recognition of the full Christ of the Scriptures, is a question which only the future will answer. Independently of this question, however, it may now be held established, as the trustworthy result of the examination of the history of doctrines, that the solution of the Christologic problem is to be expected neither from the standpoint of Pantheism nor of Deism, but only from the Theistic standpoint; that it is most safely attempted in the light of Christ's own utterances and those of His Apostles, accurately explained, and apprehended in all their depth; but, above all, that we ought never to make our recognition of the existence of this union of the Divine and human in Christ dependent, as to its ultimate authority, upon our insight into the nature and manner thereof. Only where this is not overlooked, shall we succeed, not merely in firmly holding and defending the doctrine of the Gospel and of the Church, but also in developing and purifying the conception of the latter with regard thereto. Every fresh Christologic examination conducted in this spirit becomes, as it were, a voyage of discovery upon an unfathomable sea; but in connection with which we have ever to steer clear of "the two warning buoys" of Docetism on the left hand, and Ebionitism on the right.

Compare, besides the standard work of DORNER, already repeatedly mentioned, especially M. SCHNECKENBURGER, *Zur kirchl. Christologie* (1848); C. H. WEISSE, *Die Christologie Luther's und die Christol. Aufgabe der Evang. Theol.* (1855); L. TH. SCHULZE, *Vom Menschensohn und vom Logos* (1867). On the more recent views and

writings on the life of Jesus, see the postscript to the second edition of our *Leven van Jezus* (1865), as also H. ROPE, *Dass der ideale Christus mit dem historischen steht und fällt* (1869). A very clear résumé of the doctrine of the Lutheran Church as to the *communicatio idiomatum* is to be found in LUTHARDT, *l. l.*, § 51.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

The Christology of the Apocryphal Gospels, of the earliest heretics, and of the Apostolic Fathers.—Difference and relation between the doctrine of Origen and Arianism.—History and criticism of Semi-Arianism.—Origin, progress, and issue of the Monophysite controversy.—Theopaschitism and Monothelitism.—What significance has John Damascenus for the Christologic question?—The Christology of earlier and later Mysticism.—Further treatment of the Lutheran Christology, as compared with that of the Reformed Church.—The controversy between the Tübingen and the Giessen Theologians on the point of the κένωσις.—The Christologic peculiarity of the system of the Quakers, Methodists, Moravians, Swedenborgians, and Irvingites.—To what extent can one speak, since the time of Schleiermacher, of progress in the domain of Christology?—Old error in a new dress.—Romance in the garb of Science.—Danger of exaggeration in the most modern conception and application of the doctrine of the Kenôsis.

SECTION XCVII.—HIS MESSIANIC CHARACTER.

In whatever respects Christians of an earlier and later time differ with regard to the person of the Lord, all agree in this particular, that in Him the prophetic ideal is fully realised; and that not only in the sense that He thought, constituted, and showed Himself the Messiah; but rather in this, that He was as such sent, manifested, and accredited by the Father Himself. This truth rests not simply upon His own utterances and those of His first witnesses, but above all upon the fact that He wrought the work of the Messiah, fulfilled the expectation of antiquity, and satisfied the wants of humanity. The confession, that Jesus is the Christ, has for this reason, not merely an historical significance, but also a moral and religious one, and is therefore with good reason permanently required of all His people.

1. If the Theanthropic character of the Lord presented for our thought an enigma, of which no complete solution is to be looked for, we enter upon more even ground when we direct our attention to the Christ of God, in relation to His people and to the world. The true and holy God-man appeared on earth as the Messiah of Israel, and it is to this peculiarity in connection with Him that our attention must now be directed. For it is far from true that the statement, "Jesus is the Christ," is, as Modern Naturalism is so ready to assert—however important, perhaps, for the

Jew — one of only a very subordinate importance for the Christian. The whole of the New Testament lays especial stress upon the Messianic character of Christ's appearing, and also in the Church Symbols mention is made thereof as of something important.[1] The idea of the Messiah entertained by the contemporaries of the Lord no doubt stood in very close connection with their nationality, and was even far from pure; but yet it was in its essence and kernel nothing less than the fruit of a special revelation. Those who attach no permanent importance to this idea, generally do so because, whilst admitting the existence of Messianic expectations, they do not believe in true Messianic predictions, pointing by Divine revelation to Jesus of Nazareth, and receiving their fulfilment in Him. From their standpoint the Messianic expectation is indeed something psychologically remarkable, but after all merely subjective; and the utterance of the Lord's self-consciousness in this respect, only the expression of a personal opinion entertained by Him as a child of His generation, and which has for us at most an historic interest, but in no case any dogmatic importance. On the other hand, from the standpoint of the Christian belief in revelation, it is by no means an insignificant matter that in this Jesus, as in no one before or after Him, definite promises of God were fulfilled, which present His personality in an entirely unique light; and thus consequently the practice of many dogmatists, in passing over this point in almost entire silence, cannot be sanctioned.

2. To the question what we mean when we speak of Jesus as the Christ, the answer cannot be difficult. It is equivalent to saying that He is the King of Israel, promised in old times by the Prophets, sent into the world by the Father, anointed with the Holy Ghost, and destined to rule for ever over a kingdom which is ever-enduring.[2] Thus, as by the appellation Son of God, the metaphysical dignity is ascribed to Him, so by that of Messiah,[3] is His Theocratic dignity indicated, and, indeed, in such wise that this dignity is declared to belong to Him by God Himself. The meaning is thus absolutely not, that Jesus set up the claim of being Himself the Messiah, and, after long-continued reflection on the condition and wants of His people, formed the bold resolution of realising in His own person the national Messianic expectation. In that case He would not have been essentially different from those false Christs, against whom He so earnestly warns His disciples,[4] and whom we see appearing in great number, during and after the Apostolic age. Something more was necessary than a bold resolution to appear in a character of which the greatest of the Prophets did not wish to assume even the appearance.[5] Whoever for a single moment conceives to himself all that is expected of the person and work of the Messiah, according to the word of prophecy, will understand that one must have been a deceiver or a fanatic to pretend to be such, unless, according to the counsel of God and the utterance of his own innermost self-consciousness, he really *was* so. If, with Schleiermacher, we are to reckon the resolve to appear as Messiah among the "accommodations"

[1] *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 18; *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xviii.
[2] Luke i. 32, 33.
[3] John i. 41.
[4] Matt. xxiv. 5.
[5] Luke iii. 15, 16.

which the Lord must allow Himself, in order to attain to the end He had in view, then we owe His whole activity—in the end—to an *idée fixe*, the origin and power of which, again, remains incomprehensible to us.

3. On what grounds have we to regard the Lord as the Messiah in the sense above mentioned? First of all the utterances of His own consciousness must here come under consideration—utterances which we cannot suspect, and must thus receive with reverence as the expression of positive truth. Even the name Son of Man is, from this point of view, of great significance,[6] as that which—while it presupposes a suprahuman descent—was at the same time the figurative indication of the Messianic dignity. The Lord does not merely suffer Himself to be regarded as the Messiah, as is maintained by Scholten and Renan; but notably wishes to be regarded as such by His disciples, although He for wise reasons forbids the manifestation and proclamation of this His dignity. Not only in the middle, or towards the end of His public life, but even at its very beginning, does He display the clear consciousness thereof, and even with death immediately before Him He maintains his character of Messiah. Had the Messianic idea been simply the non-essential form, of which the Lord made use in order to accomplish His benevolent design, the abandoning of this form, at least when everything was at stake, would have been counselled no less by a sense of duty than of prudence. Yet He does not for a single moment think of taking this course, and even regards as inconceivable continued silence on the part of His disciples with regard to His Messiahship.[7] On the ground of His αὐτὸς ἔφα we must thus believe that, in order to His fulfilling the work of the Messiah, the Father set His seal upon Him.[8] "His life," as Lange justly remarks, "is His office. Not of men and by men, but of the Father, has He received the official mission; namely, that with the completed manifestation of His inner life He should effect the redemption of the world." The *events* of the Lord's life, from the manger to the cross, corresponding in so remarkable a manner with the Messianic expectation, prove that this utterance of His self-consciousness was no fruit of an incomprehensible illusion. His *deeds* answer entirely to the description of that which, in accordance with the prophetic word, was expected of the Messiah;[9] and the *effect* of His appearing plainly shows that He has in reality founded that kingdom of God which was looked for by kings and prophets. The consciousness that He should renew the face of the moral world, was expressed by Him at a time when even the attempt to do so might appear madness, and yet—His word has been fulfilled.

4. The development of the Messianic consciousness with which we see the Lord appear, and in which we see Him live and work unto the end, is not more nearly described in the Gospel, and can only be inferred in general from certain *data*. It is clear that it must have been most closely connected with the development of the consciousness of His higher nature; that, in unison with the latter, it was gradually, and at the same time mediately, accomplished; and that, next to solitude, prayer, and com-

[6] Compare Dan. vii. 13, 14; John xii. 34.
[7] Luke xix. 40.
[8] ἐσφράγισεν, John vi. 27.
[9] Matt. xi. 4, 5; comp. Isa. xxxv. 5, 6.

munion with His own Spirit, it was especially the examination of the Scriptures of the Old Testament which early contributed powerfully to awaken within the Lord the sense of His high vocation. The influence, also, of a mother like Mary ought just as little to be overlooked as to be overrated. Thus, that which had subjectively attained to perfect clearness in Him even before the commencement of His public ministry,[10] became objectively sealed for Him by the revelation and testimony of the Father at the baptism in the Jordan. Here, as the promised King who has at length appeared, He receives the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Not that He had lived for thirty years without this Spirit, who had filled a John even from the earliest beginning of his existence, and who had in a miraculous manner brought about the Lord's birth.[11] But just as little are we to assume that He received at His baptism nothing essentially new; or at most only outward gifts, essential to the work to which He was called. In a life like that of the Lord, the *person* and the *office* cannot possibly be separated the one from the other; and evidently that which took place at the Jordan was even for the Lord Himself a fact of high significance. The full light arises upon us when, holding firmly to the reality of His incarnation, we do not lose sight of the distinction between the possession and the use of the Divine properties. Only by degrees, and after a long time, awakening to the consciousness of His rank and work, and, in addition to this, unceasingly exposed to the severest temptations, the God-*man* had need of an objective confirmation of that which had already become to Him subjectively clear and certain. The transition from the hidden to the public life undoubtedly coincides with a turning-point in the history of the development of His inner life; and He who before had an abundance of the Spirit, now received of the Father the "Spirit not by measure,"[12] in the power of which He would henceforth live and work, and, among other works, perform signs and wonders,[13] which He had not wrought before. The Spirit acts not simply, as hitherto, powerfully *upon* Him, but rests and dwells *in* Him as in no one else, and henceforth unceasingly flows out from Him, as the Head, into all His true members. Perhaps we may say that the Holy Ghost, given without measure to the Christ, formed the proper bond of communion between the incarnate Son and the Father.

5. The place which the recognition of the Messianic dignity of the Lord occupies in the consciousness of the ancient Church with regard to its faith, and in the preaching of the Apostles, may—after what has been said—be pointed out without difficulty, and as easily explained. The confession of Jesus as the Messiah is not, indeed, the only thing, but yet is the first, which distinguishes Christians of the Jews from their brethren according to the flesh. It makes Saul to be Paul, and forms the text of his first proclamation.[14] In the addresses of Peter, on the day of Pentecost and afterwards, it is emphatically prominent; so too in the case of Paul, not only when he is in the presence of Jews, but also in the presence of Gentiles.[15] Even well-nigh at the end of his life, he makes mention of

[10] Matt. iii. 15.
[11] Luke i. 15, 35.
[12] John iii. 34.
[13] Matt. xii. 28.
[14] Acts ix. 20.
[15] Acts xvii. 2, 3; xxvi. 18, 19; Rom. xvi. 25, 26.

this truth as a constituent part of his Gospel;[16] while, according to John, he who denies it, thereby places himself entirely outside the limits of the Christian faith.[17] It cannot, then, surprise us, that already the earliest Apologetic literature bears evidence of an express endeavour to defend the Messiahship of Christ against doubt and denial; as is seen, for instance, in Justin Martyr's *Dialog. cum Tryph.*

6. Nevertheless, the question remains, What value must we, Christians of the Gentiles, attach to this truth, and the confession thereof? and the answer to this question is felt to be wholly determined by the light in which the Scriptures of the Old Testament are regarded. If Israel's prophets were simply popular orators and poetic dreamers, it is a matter of little importance for us that eighteen hundred years ago a Rabbi arose, who had the courage and force of character to make—undoubtedly with the best of intentions—the realisation of these fair dreams of an earlier age the great object and work of his life. If, on the contrary, we hold fast to the idea of a living God, a particular revelation, a holy Scripture, then this confession is and remains for us also of incontestable importance. It confirms, indeed, the faithfulness of God, who has in this way fulfilled His own promises;[18] and thereby at the same time confirms the inseparable unity of the Old Testament and the New. It furnishes us moreover with the fitting key wherewith to explain, in their historical connection, the words, deeds, and events in the life of the Lord. Finally, it stands in direct relation with our only source of comfort, since the Messiah of Israel is at the same time the Saviour of the world.[19] He who grows enthusiastic about Jesus, but refuses to see in Him the Christ in the objective sense of the word, has in any case another Christianity than that of the Apostles and Prophets, Evangelists and Church Fathers, Reformers and Martyrs. As Kahnis has well said, "No value can be attached by the Christian faith to the activity of a Jesus who was not the Christ. If Jesus was not the Christ, then the Apostles, who saw in Jesus the Christ, are, properly speaking, the founders of Christianity."

7. The defence of the truth under consideration must be conducted with the utmost care, and, from the nature of the case, must be of a twofold kind: that against Antichristian Judaism on the one hand, and that against pseudo-Christian Naturalism on the other.—As concerns the first of these, the question at once is, whether the Jews with whom we come in contact still believe in the Prophets, and look for a personal Messiah? If not, they must first of all be recovered, if possible, from their Deism and Pantheism, and led to a need of the Gospel. If they do, we ought especially to show that the oldest Jewish expositors have usually explained those places of the Messiah, which have been taken in another sense by later Jews. In so doing, the Messianic interpretation is to be defended and established, not simply by an examination of particular utterances, but by a consideration of the great whole of the Old Dispensation. Especially must we seek to awaken the sense of sin and the felt need of redemption, and to render apparent the proof of the Messianic dignity of the Lord, which

[16] 2 Tim. ii. 8.
[17] 1 John ii. 22. 23.
[18] Acts xiii. 32.
[19] John iv. 42; xx. 31.

is given us in the history and present condition of the Jewish people.—As concerns the pseudo-Christian Naturalism, its objections to the reality and dignity of the Messianic character of the Lord have *partly* a philosophic, *partly* an historico-critical, *partly* again a religious-humanistic character. The first are based on the assumption that such an extraordinary mission of Christ as is here supposed was unnecessary and impossible. They must be answered by a due presentation and defence of the doctrine of sin, and of the Christian-Theistic idea of revelation.—Those of the second kind are ordinarily directed against the accounts in the Gospels, by which, above all, the Messianic character of the Lord is proved, such as the birth at Bethlehem, the Davidic descent, the miracle at the baptism, etc. Here the criticism which is under the sway of Naturalistic prejudice, can be vanquished only by a legitimately free but at the same time genuinely spiritual review of the contested accounts.—The last, finally, are connected with the notable effort to eliminate from the Gospel history all that falls beyond the framework of a merely human life. That effort must be contested in principle; and, in opposition thereto, it must be shown how every attempt to save religion by the sacrifice of the Supranatural proceeds from self-deception, and inevitably ends in disappointment. In this and other ways it will not be impossible to reduce the gainsayer at least to a momentary silence. True conviction, however, on this point also will only be wrought where one has learnt in a practical empirical way to recognise in the Christ of Scripture the Redeemer of the world, whose appearing has not merely a national, but also a universal and eternal significance.

Comp. C. T. W. HELD, *Jesus der Christ* (1865); F. COULIN, *Le Fils de l'Homme* [Eng. trans.]; and moreover the literature mentioned in our Handbook of the *Biblical Theol. N. T.*, § xi.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

The Messianic expectation of the contemporaries of the Lord.—The appellation Son of Man.—In what sense may we speak of a development of the Messianic consciousness of the Lord, and of a plan, properly speaking, on His part?—The significance of the descent of the Holy Ghost at the baptism, in connection with the doctrine of the Kenôsis.—The relation between λόγος and πνεῦμα.—Is there ground for supposing that the plan of Jesus was more or less changed or modified during His public life?—Must we assume, with Colani, that the Lord first began to proclaim Himself the Messiah at the period indicated in Matt. xvi. 13?—Explanation and importance of Matt. xxvi. 63, 64.—Whence was it that the contemporaries of the Lord refused to recognise His character of Messiah?—History and method of the assailing and defence of this truth.—Why is it not possible to reject it, and still to remain a Christian?

SECTION XCVIII.—HIS DESIGNATION TO BE THE SAVIOUR OF MANKIND.

The Christ of the Prophets is at the same time ordained of God to be Saviour of the world and King of a spiritual Kingdom,

in which the Divine plan with regard to the world is fully realised. As true and holy God-man, He is fully qualified for this office. The decree of Redemption and the Personality of the Redeemer thus harmonise together in glorious concord.

1. The confession of the Lord's Messiahship, duly defined and maintained, affords us a firm basis on which further to build. For the Gospel, which exalts Jesus as the Christ of Israel, at the same time proclaims Him as the Saviour of the world: far indeed from the one being in opposition to the other, the latter flows directly out of the former. Salvation proceeds from the Jews, to come through them to all nations. As the Old Testament begins with Universalism, very soon to pass over into Particularism, so do we see the very opposite in the Scriptures of the New Covenant. But thus also we arrive in our contemplation of the Person of the Lord at that point at which the transition to the contemplation of His work is equally necessary as easy. Certainly the question, *Who* is Christ, is of importance to us for this reason, above all, that it prepares the way to the solution of another question, *What* is He, and *what* does He will and accomplish in the individual man and humanity that comes into contact with Him. Here we continue, as at the limits between the one domain and the other, still to confine ourselves to the general idea which is indicated in the name of Founder of the Kingdom of God. In doing so, it is incumbent upon us to show, *first*, that He was truly designed and ordained thereto; and *secondly*, that He was, above all others, qualified to sustain the office to which He was destined.

2. That the Lord, although designated and sent first of all for Israel, was by no means exclusively so sent, is sufficiently apparent. Even the Prophets of the Old Covenant had proclaimed the universality of the approaching Kingdom of God.[1] At the annunciation of His birth, mention is made, it is true, only of *His* people,[2] but, at the same time, of a kingdom without end, which from the nature of the case must thus also farther extend itself. The Lord expressed Himself without the slightest limitation concerning the universality of the object contemplated in His appearing,[3] and His Apostles bear unequivocal testimony to the same truth.[4] The Gospel of the Kingdom is also in reality, with all its disclosures, demands, and promises, adapted to the unchangeable wants of all men and all times. Finally, the objections that are raised against the universality of the design in the appearing of Christ, originate in great measure in misconception, and are only in appearance of any force. Precepts like those we hear, Matt. x. 5, were simply temporary, and are later modified:[5] Jesus Himself, for wise reasons, limited His activity to the house of Israel;[6] but yet once and again—where He found faith—stepped

[1] Isa. ii. 2—4; Mal. i. 11; compare Luke ii. 32; John i. 29.
[2] Matt. i. 21.
[3] Matt. xx. 28; xxiv. 14; Luke xix. 10; John x. 16.
[4] Acts x. 34—36; Ephes. ii. 14—16; Col. iii. 11.
[5] Luke xxiv. 47; compare Acts i. 8.
[6] Matt. xv. 24; compare John iv. 22.

beyond these bounds of temporary appointment. Peter also, on the day of Pentecost, already looks forth to those "who are afar off,"[7] and while soon afterwards he stands in need of a particular revelation before he repairs to the house of Cornelius, this was only needed to show him that Gentiles also were actually called into the kingdom of God without first becoming Jews. The confession of the Samaritans (John iv. 42) we may for all these reasons boldly make our own; and he who would have us suppose that the Evangelical doctrine of a personal election to salvation (§ lxxxii.) is irreconcilable therewith, only shows that the difference and connection between this latter and the Divine plan of salvation is not clear to his mind. This last is and remains universal in its extent, and the Christ the centre of a circle of salvation which embraces nothing less than a lost world. In consequence of this its place, His personality has not simply a religious and ethical, but a direct cosmical value (§ xc.). As the second Adam, appointed by the act of God Himself to be the Head of a wholly new humanity, He communicates His life to the most remote members of the great family which enters into communion with Him. In the words of Martensen, "As He is the heart of God the Father, so is He, at the same time, the eternal heart of the world, through which the Divine life flows forth into the Creation." Thus, precisely on account of this His universal and divinely appointed relationship, the Divine plan of salvation is realised in and through Him (§ lv.), and the great prayer of His own life is answered.[8]

3. For, that He is truly *qualified* to become the Bringer-in of salvation for the whole world, cannot, after all that has been said (§§ xcii.—xcvii.), be seriously disputed by any one. Under the influence of an earlier Scholasticism, it has at one time been attempted to prove, apparently *à priori*, what requisite qualifications a Mediator of redemption must possess, in case it pleased God to confer such an one upon us, only immediately after to show that all the required qualities are in reality found most happily united in Jesus of Nazareth.[9] But that which has been already observed at an earlier place (§ lxxxi. 5), that we can determine absolutely nothing *à priori* in this respect, is confirmed by our whole inquiry as to the Person of the Lord; and just as foolish would, on this account, the assertion be, that God could not possibly redeem the world in any other way than that which He has opened up in Christ. "They speak most foolishly," says Augustine, "who say that the wisdom of God could not otherwise redeem man than by the death of Christ. It could, indeed, but if it had done so, it would have been equally displeasing to your folly."[10] Yet it can at least without difficulty be proved *à posteriori*, that only such a person as we have learnt to know in our Lord, could be the Founder of the Kingdom of God; and that no single feature could have been wanting in the image of Christ, which we have thus far sketched, if the work of our Redemption was ever to be accomplished by Him.

4. Precisely because He was truly man (§ xcii.), could He enter into

[7] Acts ii. 39. [8] John xvii. 21—23. [9] *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 15—18.

[10] Stultissimi sunt qui dicunt, non poterat aliter sapientia Dei hominem redimere, nisi Christus moriretur. Poterat omnino, at si fecisset, æque displicuisset stultitiæ vestræ. [But compare Heb. ii. 10.]

our wants and necessities. No deliverance of the sinful world, as we shall soon see, was possible unless He from whom it was to proceed should descend as it were into our depth, to raise us to His height. This is, among other places, distinctly expressed in Heb. ii. 11, and moreover is self-evident. Only as truly man could the Son of God be the highest revelation of the Father in the nature most highly developed, and the one best known to us here below. Only thus could He suffer and die, have sympathy with our infirmities,[11] and raise His people to the highest degree of glory and blessedness.[12] As man, yet only as *spotless* man (§ xciii). Show me a single moral blemish in Christ, and the world's physician of souls will Himself require a healer. But it is precisely the moral perfection of this personality, that He never forgets Himself, and thus also never needs to recal His words or actions. "The Redeemer," to use the words of Rothe, "needs never to do a thing twice, in order morally to learn it, in the widest sense of the term." Every moment is He equally certain with regard to Himself as with regard to the Father, and on that account have we perfect confidence fully to rely for our salvation upon His word and work. And thus His person is for us God's highest revelation, His life the highest ideal, His death out of perfect obedience and love a sacrifice of inestimable value, and moreover His intercession above, as the Righteous One, of ever-abiding propitiatory force.[13]

5. Yet He who was merely the ideal man, *i.e.*, the one in whom the Divine ideal of humanity is realised, could not be the Founder of that Kingdom of God which is proclaimed to us in the Gospel. To be able to lay the foundation of an absolutely boundless and spiritual kingdom, to govern and bring to perfection this kingdom, Divine powers and properties are necessary; and not simply the so-called communicable ones, but also those which are incommunicable—Omnipresence, Omniscience, Eternity, etc. But the Lord, as we have seen, was more than the ideal man, who as such would occupy no higher rank than that of a creature. He testifies of Himself that which lies wholly beyond the limits even of the purest humanity, as do His Apostles also of Him: yea, it must be admitted without reserve that, "if He is a mere man, although also an ideal one, then the many places in which He ascribes to Himself Divine names, rights, and functions, become self-accusations; the Apostles are false witnesses, and guilty of the Deification of man; the New Testament ceases to be the fountain-head of truth, since in its central-doctrine it is neither true nor clear; the Church also has given false testimony in its foundation-article."[14] But just because He is God-man in the full force of the word, so that here the Divine Logos is united in one person with the human nature (*unitus, non inclusus*)[15] can He now do and bear that which surpasses mere human ability; and He has power to lay down His life, but at the same time to communicate to all flesh that which He personally possesses in Himself,[16] yea, to rise to that dominion over all created things, to which humanity in communion with God was originally destined.[17]

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[11] Heb. ii. 14—18.
[12] Heb. v. 8, 9.
[13] 1 John ii. 2.
[14] Kahnis.
[15] Erasmus.
[16] John x. 18; xvii. 2.
[17] Heb. ii. 5—9; comp. Ps. viii.

6. It is clear that only a Christ who was true and holy man, but at the same time sharer of God's nature and majesty, could be the Founder of the Kingdom of God; and that consequently a direct connection exists between the universality of the design in His appointment, and the peculiar nature of His personality. But thus it is at the same time evident that this universal designation of the Founder of the Kingdom of God manifests a very practical side, and may be regarded as exceedingly fruitful, both for the Christian faith and the Christian life. If the person of the Lord is equally destined as qualified to be the Redeemer of the World, then even in this fact is His value, as the highest "gift" of the Father, raised beyond all doubt; then the proclamation of His Gospel is—not for some only, but for all—the powerful, divinely ordained means for salvation through faith; then our courage rises to the point of hoping for the victory of the Kingdom of God, our zeal to that of labouring for it. But now also is evident to us, above all, how the decree of Redemption realised in the Person of this Redeemer, is the most glorious manifestation of the wisdom of God, worthy in every respect of Him who framed it. Truly—and the conclusion of this chapter may at the same time form the transition to the following one—*nihil tam Deo dignum, quam hominum salus.*[18]

Compare our *Leven van Jezus*, p. 461, *sqq.*, and *Christol.*, iii., pp. 228—244; H. KRITZLER, *Christenthum und Humanität* (1866, 2 parts); J. CRAMER, *Christend. en Humaniteit* (1871).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Is all Particularism in reality overcome in the Scriptures of the New Testament?—On what account is it that the fitness of the person of the Redeemer for the object of His mission cannot receive an *à priori* support?—Criticism of the method of the Heidelberg Catechism, Answers 15—18.—Is Christianity in reality destined and adapted to be the highest religion of humanity?—Is it to be expected, on good grounds, that it will as such one day triumph over all resistance?—Is there ground for supposing that the saving purpose and work of Christ extends beyond this earth?—Ephes. i. 10; Col. i. 20.—Sense and meetness of the doxology, Rom. xi. 33—36.

[18] Nothing is so worthy of God as the salvation of men (Tertullian).

CHAPTER IV.

ON REDEMPTION; OR, THE SALVATION ENJOYED IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

(OBJECTIVE SOTERIOLOGY.)

SECTION XCIX.—TRANSITION AND GENERAL SURVEY.

SOTERIOLOGY, most closely connected with Christology, and of as great importance as this, has for its aim the more express exposition of this Salvation of God's kingdom in its full extent. While avoiding all vagueness on the one side, and all narrow-minded clinging to systems on the other, it seeks to place in the true light as well the work of the Redeemer as the blessing of Redemption. The logical course requires that we should consecutively look at the deeds Christ has wrought for the salvation of the world, and at the benefits salvation procures for Christians.

1. The *connection* between this and the preceding chapter is of course reciprocal; and as the meditation on Christ Himself prepared us for that on His work, so can this latter only be explained by the light in which the Gospel presents Him. Both, indeed, are so closely connected, that Personal and Official names are usually indiscriminately ascribed to Him; and never certainly would so warm a controversy have been waged about the person of the Saviour, had it not been at all times felt that the Christologic question has not only a speculative, but also a practical Soteriological import. As a rule, accordingly, error and misconception with regard to the one is accompanied by error or misconception with regard to the other; a Socinian Christology, *e.g.*, can hardly serve as the foundation for an Anselmian Soteriology. On the other hand, it is easy to comprehend that some could find in the person of Christ the key to understand His work; while others, by the contemplation of His work, have arrived at a better appreciation of His person. Hardly anywhere in the New Testament do we see the one entirely separated from the other.

2. The *importance* of the examination which now lies before us, can certainly not be denied. Were not every comparison unjust where the different subjects of doctrine represent different sides of the same truth, we should affirm that we here stand before the very centre of the whole doctrine of Salvation. Yea, even Christ merits this name, only because He has wrought that work which will now occupy us. The question (Acts xvi. 30) stands, in point of importance and significance, at least on a level with that other, "What think ye of Christ?" and error concerning the Way of Salvation is certainly not less pernicious than that concerning the Person of the Redeemer. The interest, therefore, with regard to the matter under examination, ought not to flag, but rather to increase.

3. The *compass* of this examination is just as extended as its importance is great. It embraces, in a word, all which belongs to the broad domain of Redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις), in the comprehensive sense in which this word is used in the Scriptures of the New Testament. The redemption of the individual man and of humanity, of the world and the nations; redemption in its nature and ground, essence and value, here always understood as it was effected objectively by Christ—while that which is demanded on the side of man in order personally to become a recipient of this salvation (subjective Soteriology) will be treated in a following chapter—here now, if anywhere, we have to do with the "unsearchable riches" of Christ.[1]

4. The *standpoint*, from which Soteriology will be treated, naturally entirely depends on the dogmatic conviction of him who expounds it. Hence the history of this doctrine is not less marked by manifold variation and conflict, than is that of Christology. Nowhere, perhaps, does the personal relation of the dogmatist to the Gospel of salvation so distinctly reflect itself as in his mode of presenting the doctrine of propitiation. In general, that presentation is certainly to be regarded as the best, which adheres most closely to the united testimony of Scripture and Experience, and in so doing recognises the fact of sin and misery in all its depth. Soteriology presupposes the truth of Christian Hamartology, but further builds at the same time upon that which has been already taught in an earlier place concerning the Divine plan of the world, and of salvation (§§ lv. and lxxxii.), and concerning the image of God in man (§ lxix).

5. Here also the abundance of the material renders necessary a *division*, which may be made in more than one way. In our judgment it is preferable *first* to fix the eye upon that which Christ has done, is doing, and will further do, for the salvation of man and of humanity, and *afterwards* to direct the attention more especially to that salvation itself in its nature and value; in other words, to make the object of our separate examination the *opus Christi* and the *salus in Christo*. The latter, however, is here still thought of more in relation to the individual than to the whole communion, and to the development of the future. Soteriology must not too much anticipate that which is first in its proper place when we come to Ecclesiology and Eschatology. Not inaptly also will the former subdivision attach itself to the doctrine of the different *conditions* (*status*) of the

[1] Ephes. iii. 8.

Redeemer; the latter to that of the threefold *office* (*munus triplex*), in which He has effected—and is effecting—the work of redemption.

6. In the *treatment* of the subject in this way, two rocks are to be avoided: that of a vague *indeterminateness* on the one hand, which is not seldom found in the Soteriological ideas even of those who in other respects form a clear conception regarding God, Man, and the Person of Christ, but in *this* particular domain lose themselves in obscurity. But not less to be avoided is that of a Scholastic *propensity for systems*, which seeks to comprehend the whole of the salvation in Christ as it were within a framework, which fits in each particular with the other to a hair's breadth, and by which, on all sides, perfect justice is done to the great subject. The abundance of Soteriological indications in Holy Scripture is too great for it to be possible so to combine them that all the demands of systematic arrangement should receive satisfaction. Soteriology is the exposition of those facts connected with salvation, which the believer—according to the testimony of Scripture—has learned by his own experience of inner life, and for which the spiritually developed understanding seeks the most accurate expression possible. Thus in this domain also life ever exists before the conception thereof, and only approximately can we express by the latter, that which is known and enjoyed by the former. Here, accordingly, if anywhere, the *passion* for systems may become the grave of the love of truth; and we must ever keep an open eye for every germ of truth, perhaps also hidden in a mode of presentation which differs more or less from ours, but which nevertheless, as well as ours, has its foundation in Scripture and Experience. Precisely the most distinguished Soteriologians will certainly find the least difficulty in endorsing the words of one of the most excellent of them: "I think it would have fared better with the word of redemption, particularly in our modern times, if people had contemplated the Sun as the sun, instead of plucking out the beams one by one, which thus isolated must indeed vanish. The sunbeams thou canst not bind into a bundle, nor put the sea into a goblet. I also have tried it, and failed—have applied the square of theoretically acquired formulas to the great mystery of godliness, until the square shrivelled up in my hand, and I could no longer measure, till it was cast away."[2] Due attention to the hint thus afforded will at the same time best arm us against the one-sidedness of which they especially render themselves guilty, who direct us almost exclusively to the suffering and dying, or to the doctrine and example, or to the Spirit and word of Christ, as that to which we are especially indebted for our redemption. We ought to overlook nothing of all that whereby the King of the Kingdom of God is in the fullest sense the *life* of the world; but also, however exactly all is combined and formulated, we ought still to consider that even the best of buckets cannot exhaust the sea.

Compare, for the exegetical examination, the principal Handbooks of the *Bibl. Theol. of the N. T.*; for the historical, F. C. BAUR, *Die Christl. Lehre von der Versöhnung, u. s. w.* (1838); A. RITSCHL, *Die Christl. Lehre von der Rechtf. und Versöhnung*, i. (1870).

[2] THOLUCK, *Die wahre Weihe des Zweiflers*, 9th ed., p. 63.

Finally, for the Christian-philosophic, the Dogmatics of LANGE, MARTENSEN, NITZSCH, and others. Also, the important article of E. DE PRESSENSÉ, *Sur la Rédemption*, in the *Bulletin Théol.* (1867), i. and following; and SCHOEBERLEIN's art. *Erlösung*, in Herzog's *R. E.*, iv., pp. 129—140.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Wherefore, according to the Scripture of the New Test., is every true proclamation of Christ at the same time in nature and tendency a preaching of the Gospel?—The precise idea of *ἀπολύτρωσις*.—Whence is it that the nature and extent of Redemption has been so differently conceived of and expressed?—Where is the touchstone to be found, by which we may best judge of the value of the different views on this question?—Whence is it that in the treatment of the doctrine of Salvation, properly so called, many in earlier and later times have laboured under so much one-sidedness? and how is this defect to be best avoided?

FIRST DIVISION.

THE SAVING DEEDS.

SECTION C.—BEFORE THE INCARNATION.

In order to survey as completely as possible the redeeming work of Christ, Christian Dogmatics rightly distinguishes between that which He has done for sinners in His state of Humiliation, and that which He is doing for them in the state of Exaltation; and makes each of these the subject of a separate examination. In following this course we must not, however, overlook that which necessarily preceded both. The Word was made flesh; but, even before the fulness of time, in Him was the life and the light of men.

1. The work of Christ forms in itself one whole, completed as to its principle, when He left the earth.[1] But that which for His consciousness was inseparable, must be divided in our presentation of it, on account of the extent and dignity of the subject. A sharp line of separation between the different parts would lead to one-sidedness; but correctness of distinction is here one of the first requirements. Thus the old dogmatic mode of speaking of a twofold state (*duplex status*), in which the Lord accomplished His redeeming work, is to be approved in principle; and we cannot be surprised that traces of it present themselves even in the earliest Fathers. Irenæus emphatically speaks of the Logos as *invisibilis visibilis factus, incomprehensibilis comprehensibilis factus*,[2] and Tertullian[3] points to a change which took place with the Son at His incarnation, without His ceasing to be that which He originally was.—Especially after the Reformation do we see this distinction brought into the foreground, both by Lutheran and Reformed Theologians; but, at the same time, a violent controversy breaks out both about the Person of Him who was to be considered as the proper subject of this twofold state (status *exinanitionis et exaltationis*), and the precise idea of this humiliation itself, as well as about the different degrees (*gradus*) into which each of these two conditions was to be divided again. Notably it was a question whether the so-called Descent into Hell was to be reckoned with the Reformed Theologians as still belonging to His state of Humiliation, or rather with the Lutheran, as belonging to His state of Exaltation already begun. Considering the much useless verbal

[1] John xvii. 4. [2] IREN., *Adv. Haer.* iii. 16. [3] TERTULL., *De carne Christi*, c. 3.

controversy on either side, it is intelligible that the whole dogma which gave rise thereto should, by the end of last century, have fallen into a sort of discredit. Our century is in this respect more reasonably and favourably disposed, but none the less will not permit the challenging of its right to bring the Church's doctrinal type into greater harmony with the Scriptural basis, from which it has in more than one point deviated.

2. The doctrine of the *Status duplex* has its ground in certain utterances of the Lord Himself,[4] and more particularly in those of Paul.[5] An accurate explanation of Phil. ii. 6—8, especially, shows that here the Son of God, *before* His incarnation—the Logos ἄσαρκος—is spoken of, who, in consequence of a wholly voluntary act—ἐκένωσε—passed over into a condition of humiliation, which began with His incarnation, and culminated in His death on the cross, and which—as a reward for the obedience therein displayed—was followed by a state of exaltation. Naturally, this distinction is void of all meaning, where, in direct opposition to the testimony of Holy Scripture, the Lord is regarded only as an excellent man, and His personal pre-existence in particular is denied. Where, however, this last is confessed, there is every reason for speaking, not only of a twofold, but of a threefold, state of the Lord; namely, *before*, *in*, and *after* His state of humiliation upon earth—status *præ-existentiæ*, *exinanitionis*, et *exaltationis*. The subject, then, of the first of these, was the Logos ἄσαρκος, who voluntarily surrendered Himself to the second condition, and thence, as Logos ἔνσαρκος, was exalted again by the Father, and brought back with increased splendour to the first condition.

3. While we have already spoken of the pre-existence of the Son of God, as such (§ xciv.), the question also as to His redeeming activity before His coming into the world ought not to remain wholly unanswered. Personally a sharer of the nature, *i.e.*, also of the power, wisdom, and love of the Father, the Logos cannot possibly have remained inactive. Holy Scripture accordingly actually teaches that not only were all things created by Him, but also that the Father bears, *i.e.*, upholds and preserves, all things by the word of His power.[6] "To bear," says Calvin,[7] "is to cause that all things remain in their own state; for he understands that all things would presently *fall into ruin*, unless they were *upheld* by His power." The Lord Himself is naturally and majestically silent, during His life of humiliation, as to that which He was and did before His coming in the flesh; but His most trusted Apostle, in John i. 4, 5, sheds a wondrous light on this subject. For all men, without any distinction of Jew or Gentile, the Logos was ever the fountain of Life and Light, alike in the natural and spiritual sense. Whatever light and life ever was beheld and enjoyed upon earth, arose under the mighty influence, direct or indirect, of the pre-existing Logos.

4. It is, however, of importance not to confound His working in Israel with that in the Gentile world. With reference to the former, we may—in the light of Holy Scripture—speak of a previous drawing nigh and seeking of Israel by the Word who was with God and was God, before in the

[4] John iii. 13; vi. 62; xvi. 28.
[5] 2 Cor. viii. 9; Phil. ii. 6—8.
[6] Heb. i. 3.
[7] CALVIN, *in loc.*

fulness of time He was made manifest among this people.[8] The Christ, whose Spirit was in the Prophets, proclaimed Himself by their voice before His incarnation.[9] Notwithstanding considerable difficulties, the view which sees in the Angel of the Presence spoken of by Isaiah,[10] the Son of God before His incarnation, has inner probability in its favour. Such revelations stood, in this case, in relation to that of the fulness of time, as the lightning flashes issuing from the nocturnal cloud to the rising dawn of day.—As far as the Gentile world is concerned, it is natural here to think especially of the most sublime utterances of the Greek philosophic mind. It belongs to the great merits of the Alexandrine school, that it has, more than any other, fixed the attention upon the propædeutic and pædagogic character of philosophy. The notion also of the Logos Spermaticos, in Justin Martyr, is in this connection of great significance and many-sided application.

5. The whole activity of the Son of God before His incarnation bears an exalted and beneficent character, but not yet actually a redeeming one. It is for this reason here mentioned simply as the basis and starting-point for that which He—after His appearing as the Redeemer of the world—both in the state of humiliation and in that of exaltation, has done, is doing, and will yet further do. As such, however, it must not be overlooked, since His activity after His Incarnation becomes, to a certain extent, more intelligible to us, even on account of His previous activity. Yea, the incarnation of the Word, the true beginning of His work of redemption properly so called, is, on the other hand, simply the continuation of that which the Logos had already earlier effected in order to bring in light and life.

Compare § lxxxviii., and the literature there mentioned; to which may be added SCHNECKENBURGER, *Beiträge zur Christologie* (1848), as also our Treatise, *De Heilsverwachting der oude Heidenwereld*, in the Review *voor Kerk en Theol.*, i., p. 228, *sqq.* [Eng. trans., *Pr. Lantern*, Mar.—May, 1873]; and especially the beautiful preface to the interesting work, *Logos Spermaticos: Parallelstellen zum N. T. aus den Schriften der alten Griechen*, by EDM. SPIESS (1871).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Sense and argumentative force of Phil. ii. 6—8.—The Angel of the countenance (presence).—Further elucidation and criticism of the difference between the Reformed and the Lutheran Dogmatics with regard to the doctrine of the *Duplex status.*—The *quadruplex status* of the earlier Socinians.—The controversy between the Tubingen and the Giessen Theologians of the seventeenth century on the κρύψις and the κένωσις.—Criticism of the Naturalistic rejection of this whole distinction.—Defence of its dogmatic and practical importance.

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[8] John i. 11—14.
[9] 1 Pet. i. 11.
[10] Angel of His countenance, or face (פָּנָיו), Isa. lxiii. 9, 10. So the Dutch version.

SECTION CI.—THE VOLUNTARY INCARNATION.

The voluntary Incarnation is that act of love on the part of the Son of God, by which He assumed our human nature of the Virgin Mary, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, and thus became personally united to our race. Of this miraculous fact the true character can be only imperfectly described, and the possibility can be shown only from the Christian-theistic standpoint; but its historic truth reposes upon well-supported testimony, and its Soteriological importance is, according to the combined utterances of Scripture and Experience, raised above all reasonable objection.

1. The voluntary Incarnation of the Son of God must be regarded as the first step in the path of His humiliation. Apart from all the privations and sufferings which, as became later apparent, were for Him, from the beginning to the end, connected with being man among men, even the *Incarnation* itself was for the Lord a self-denial in the natural and moral aspect. And indeed, it was not His fate only, but His own act, that He appeared as man upon earth, an act of grace,[1] explicable only from the inexhaustible riches of His obedience and love,[2] in consequence of which He, who was as God and in God, placed Himself, as the Ambassador of the Father, to the Father in the lowly relation of a servant. "*Nasci se Deus voluit*," says Tertullian,—"God vouchsafed to be born." The emptying of Himself (κένωσις, *exinanitio*), of which St. Paul speaks in Phil. ii. 7, thus begins from the moment, to speak in a purely human manner, in which He says, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God."

2. As concerns the proper nature of the Kenôsis, we have already referred in a single word to this question (§ xcv. i. 6). Rightly indeed was the whole subject spoken of in a dogmatic controversy of the seventeenth century as a *profundissima quæstio*. Every view is naturally to be rejected as absurd which would in the least degree derogate from the unchangeableness of the Divine nature in itself. "That emptying," says Hilary, "is by no means the annihilating of the heavenly nature,"—*evacuatio illa nequaquam naturæ cœlestis interitus est*. With justice, therefore, has the clear distinction already been made between the possession and the use—the κτῆσις and the χρῆσις—of the Divine properties; and a voluntary surrender, not of the possession, but of the use, has been rightly supposed. "The giving up, not indeed of that which is essential to the Godhead in order to be God, but yet the giving up of the Divine mode of being, for the human form of created existence, and *eo ipso* the renouncing of the Divine glory which He had from the beginning with the

[1] 2 Cor. viii. 9. [2] John vi. 38; Heb. x. 5; comp. Heb. ii. 16.

Father, and displayed with regard to the world in ruling and controlling it. He makes the determination to accept His Divine nature only in the nearest connection with the human."[3] But even thus defined, the subject remains a Divine mystery, of which we cannot sound the depths, and can only approximately indicate the peculiar nature and meaning. Then only does some light arise for us in our investigation, when, holding firmly to the unchangeableness of God, we consider also that His unchangeable being is the highest Love, which moves in the sphere of a freedom limited only by that Love itself, and will glorify itself in personal contact with the deeply fallen nature of man, which nevertheless is yet ever allied to the Divine. On the question whether the Son of God would still have become man if sin had not come into the world, we have already expressed ourselves in another place (§ lv. 6). But enough, however it be answered, sin *was* now present; and it had become sufficiently apparent that man, although still capable of deliverance, was yet without the means of deliverance in himself (§§ lxxix., lxxx.). Nothing remained but that God Himself should interpose; and that He has done so is the irrefragable testimony of history and experience. The manner in which He has done so for ever calls forth the fervent language of adoration:

> "Den aller Weltkreis nie beschloss,
> Der lieget in Marien's Schooss;
> In unser armes Fleisch und Blut,
> Verkleidet sich das höchste Gut."[4] (Luther.)

but at the same time urges to reverent cautiousness, and to a close adherence to the expressions of Holy Scripture. Antitheses such as are presented in great number in the *nascitur æternitas*[5] and such-like expressions, have undoubtedly something exceedingly attractive for the feelings and imagination; but easily run into excess, and precisely thereby call forth doubt and opposition. It is therefore much better, while we acknowledge that the Word was with God and was God, to speak of the Incarnation of the *Son* of God, than, as some do in our day, to speak of the Incarnation of *God*. He who is acquainted with the origin and history of this latter expression in the domain of speculative philosophy, will distrust an orthodoxy which, perhaps in order to please an unthinking crowd, leans upon such questionable supports. He, on the other hand, who confines himself within the limits of the Scriptural presentation, will join in the confession—here all is astonishing, but nothing is absurd. For the human nature in which the Logos appears, is no obstacle, but the very vehicle and condition of His visible self-manifestation. If even in us men the bodily organisation is designed to be the organ and bearer of the spirit, wherefore should it not be possible for the Godhead also to dwell bodily in the temple of humanity of one who shared our nature? Any ontological difficulty, whether on the side of God or of man, which is abso-

[3] Thomasius.

[4] [He whom the whole world could not contain, now lies on Mary's breast; the Supreme Good clothes itself in our poor flesh and blood.]

[5] Eternity is born.

lutely insuperable, is unknown to us. And as little can we admit the force of empirical objections, where it is acknowledged by us that the case is wholly unique and unparalleled, while moreover it is evident that its recognition is to be maintained on historical grounds. The astronomical objection brought specially against this form of the manifestation of God, as derived from the comparative smallness of the earth (comp. § xxxi. 5), is certainly by no means insuperable from the standpoint of the highest love, which glorifies itself especially in that which is small and insignificant.[6] Last of all remains the incredible character of such unmerited Love ; but even the astonishing fact that such love is to be found, adds to the glory of this miracle, and the awakened conscience, which might here almost render belief impossible, must at the same time pronounce unbelief to be—*sin.*

3. Where the voluntary Incarnation characterises itself as the miracle of all miracles, there particular miraculous facts, which stand in immediate connection therewith, already *eo facto* cease to be insuperable obstacles to our belief. This is the case more especially with the miraculous conception and holy birth of the Lord, to which we have already briefly referred (§ xciv. 5), but to which we must now return. He who truly recognises what is Suprahuman in Christ, must—even though history had maintained an absolute silence upon this point—already *à priori* think it more probable that He had begun His life in an extraordinary manner than in a wholly ordinary one, since the grape cannot possibly be the merely natural result of a process of development in the genus of the thistle. The Gospel history meets this postulate in a manner which—as soon as one feels himself raised above the antipathy for miracles as such—is to be regarded as in the highest degree worthy of God, and, as far as the sacred narrative is concerned, perfectly trustworthy on historic grounds. For us at least no purely historico-critical reasons are known which would compel us to expunge from the roll of history the two first chapters of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, which we have here especially to take into account. The grounds which may in general be adduced in favour of the genuineness and credibility of these two Gospels, apply equally to this particular part. In all probability we have here to do with family records—the one representing the descent on Joseph's side, and the other on Mary's—and not difficult to reconcile with one another in the main points, if one only compares them in an unprejudiced spirit, and without making unreasonable requirements. If we except the Tübingen construction of the sacred history, which in Germany at least has been for some years '*verschollen*" [exploded], we shall scarcely hear any one express a doubt that the Evangelists here really intended to write the *history* of the beginning of the life of the Lord, which, after an examination expressly devoted to it, they certainly could and must know. The poetic beauty of Luke's account especially proves nothing against its truth and honesty, since here least of anywhere was it a necessity that truth and beauty should be irreconcilably opposed to each other ; where the Sun of Righteousness arises, a chorus of hymns to His praise naturally breaks forth. Besides, it must be remarked, that this whole history has a psychological truth and sobriety of description, never

[6] Ps. cxiii. 5, 6.

failing even in the minutest details, which is especially striking upon a lengthened comparison with the absurd and degraded accounts of the Nativity given in the Apocryphas, notably fantastic caricatures of the truth here related.

4. There are not wanting, it is true, *historical* objections to this first miracle in the history of the Lord's life; but they are not difficult of solution. They have been drawn (*a*) from *notices* in the Gospels, which seemed to be in opposition to those of which we have just spoken, such as, *e.g.*, the making mention of Jesus as the son of Joseph;[7] the account of the descent of the Holy Ghost at His baptism, the difference between the genealogies, and the Johannine doctrine of the Logos. As concerns the first of these, it is certainly extremely unreasonable to attach greater value to the superficial utterance of public opinion, and that on a point on which it was entirely uninformed, than to the trustworthy Gospel narrative. How could Philip, after a first meeting with Jesus, speak of Him in any other way than he did to Nathanael?—How a new and enlarged communication of the Holy Ghost at His baptism should contradict or exclude the conception by the Holy Ghost, is the less comprehensible, inasmuch as both facts are communicated by the same Evangelist, who on that account has absolutely failed to perceive their irreconcilableness.—As concerns the Genealogy, if, as we believe, that in Matthew has reference to Joseph, that in Luke to Mary, it proves nothing against, but rather in favour of, the miracle called in question. Matthew confirms the Davidic descent of the Lord, by showing the genealogy of His legal father; but asserts, at the same time, that Joseph was not His natural father. Luke speaks of Jesus as "being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph," but in reality, through Mary, a descendant of her father Heli, etc.; while afterwards in this Gospel, in default of a human father, the name of his actual mother usually passes unmentioned.—The Johannine doctrine of the Logos, finally, far indeed from being in conflict with our dogma, on the other hand calls forth and legitimates the supposition that so exalted a Person could not possibly have begun life as one of us, and thus indirectly confirms the twofold Synoptical account.

(*b.*) The *silence* also of Jesus and the Apostles is lastly seen to present less difficulty in this respect than at first sight appears. As concerns Jesus Himself, the first word of His which is known to us,[8] manifests the underlying consciousness that Joseph was *not* his father; but, in the presence of enemies at least, He certainly could not speak of this mystery, without forgetting His own lesson of Matt. vii. 6. The nature of the fact, the honour of his mother, the incapacity of the great multitude for receiving the statement; all worked together to commend a wise reserve. Other proofs, much more adapted to the capacity of men in general, and calculated to confirm His Divine origin and mission, were present in abundance, and are consequently adduced by the Apostles throughout the course of their ministry. If once on the ground of these His Supranatural character is recognised, the way is naturally and *per se* opened up for the recognition of the miraculous beginning of His life. This beginning belongs to the earlier personal history, not to that which constituted the proper

[7] Matt. xiii. 55; John i. 45. [8] Luke ii. 48, 49.

subject-matter of the Apostolic κήρυγμα, which extended from the baptism of John to the Ascension of the Lord, and which directed the attention especially to His Resurrection.[9] Yet the recognition of this miraculous fact accords with the testimony of Paul at least; for it is absolutely inconceivable that he should have regarded the second Adam, the unsullied man from heaven, as a merely *natural* descendant of the first.[10] Here the spiritual is not produced out of the natural, but enters as a new element into the sphere of the natural. Gal. iv. 4 speaks of nothing less, but also of nothing more, than the true humanity of the Lord, apparent even in His birth from a human mother.—And as concerns *John*, who, equally with Mark, passes over the whole history of the childhood and youth of the Lord, and thus found no occasion for speaking more at large of this miracle, we direct attention especially to the description of the children of God in the first chapter,[11] with a choice and accumulation of expressions, which may well call forth surprise, if we are not to suppose that the miraculous beginning of the Lord's life, undoubtedly made known to him by Mary, was more or less directly before his mind.—Yet, whatever may be thought of these scattered traces of the miraculous fact, or allusions thereto, "the miraculous conception is everywhere supposed in the New Testament, even when it is not formally indicated."[12] Yea, even with the absolute silence of all other voices, the testimony of Matthew and Luke would still remain historically intact.

5. Just as little have the objections which are raised on the more *philosophic* side such transcendent importance that we must, on account thereof, surrender the faith of the one Holy Catholic Christian Church on this point.—Even where the possibility of a miracle is admitted in the abstract, it is asserted that neither reason for such a miracle, nor end to be accomplished by it, is to be found. But what, we reply, if this miracle is nothing else than the natural consequence of the Suprahuman dignity and glory of Him who was sent into the world by the Father, as the Head of a *new* humanity? And what, again, if in consequence of this miracle the Son of Mary has remained wholly free from the trace of defilement which, according to the united testimony of Scripture and experience, sullies every child of Adam from his birth up?—It is said that God could have kept His incarnate Son free from the hereditary defilement of the race, even without a miraculous conception being necessary.[13] Undoubtedly, but in that case also only by special intervention; in other words, by another miracle, which is substituted for the one objected to. By this view, consequently, nothing is gained except an hypothesis in place of a fact; and, where this also is thought superfluous, perhaps too severe a judgment has not been formed by Ebrard when he pronounced, "the doubt as to the necessity for the Supranatural conception of Christ proceeds from a total lack of natural and philosophical tact and acquaintance with the laws of physiology."—If any one asserts that, in order to be born truly sinless, the Lord must also have no merely human mother; or that at least she—and again, *her* mother, and so on—must have been conceived miraculously,

[9] Acts i. 21, 22.
[10] 1 Cor. xv. 45—47; comp. Rom. v. 12—21.
[11] John i. 13.
[12] E. de Pressensé.
[13] Schleiermacher, Schweitzer, Keim.

he overlooks the fact that the central point in the confession of the Church lies not so much in the *natus e virgine Maria*, as in the *conceptus e Spiritu Sancto*. This Spirit without doubt set apart and sanctified Mary, as a chosen vessel, for her wholly unique vocation; without its being on that account necessary to assume anything of the same kind with regard to her mother, grandmother, etc. If, however, it were necessary, it would at any rate be better—provided a sufficient reason was to be given for doing so—to suppose an immaculate conception of the maiden-mother, than to reject that of the Lord Himself.—If, finally, it is said that Jesus would not in that case to truly man; it is presupposed that it is absolutely necessary, in order to be truly man, to be born in the ordinary manner, of father and mother; and the question arises, what *Adam* is then to be regarded as being.[14]—Thus, then, there remains only the objection which lies against a miracle as such; but to this objection the answer, for the Christian Theist, is to be found in Luke i. 37.

6. To sum up all that has been said: we deem that the miraculous beginning of the Lord's life, in connection with the whole of His history, and in the light thereof, is after all capable of being satisfactorily maintained. Especially is it seen to be so, when we consider to what conclusions one is driven in the opposite case; since Holy Scripture clearly enough shows that Joseph, who became presently the husband of Mary, was *not* the father of Jesus. The mythical interpretation of the history of the Nativity is so much the less capable of defence, inasmuch as it cannot be proved that the contemporaries of the Lord looked for an extraordinary birth of the Messiah; and as concerns the rationalistic explanation, the blasphemies of the Jews are equally well known as the impure play of fancy of a Venturini, Bahrdt, and Renan. How sacred in comparison is the Christology of the Socinians, who, whatever else they denied, at least recognised this miracle! Unquestionably it is to be deplored that the defenders of this fact did not always keep within the limits of modesty and sobriety, of which the Evangelists set the example. Just as little can the old Gnostic view, that Jesus came from heaven to earth not *of* (ἐκ) but *by means of* (διά) Mary, as water by means of a canal, stand the test of an historico-exegetical examination of Scripture, as can the doctrine of Menno, son of Simon, that the human nature of Christ was formed immediately by God through the Holy Ghost in the womb of Mary. That, on the other hand, which is related in the Gospel history concerning the mother of the Lord, and the miracle of which she was the subject, commends itself on external and internal grounds to the sanctified meditation, especially when we see in Mary the type of the purest and loftiest expectation of the Messiah,—in other words, the highest capacity, after so long and careful a preparation, for receiving and taking home to oneself the Divine.[15] Yet difficulty will always be felt to be connected with the

[14] Luke iii. 38.

[15] This thought has been strikingly expressed by the poet Lenau:—

Die Sehnsucht, die so lange Tage
Nach Gotte hier auf Erden ging,
Als Thräne, Lied, Gebet und Klage,
Sie ward Maria, und empfing.

acknowledgment of this miracle, so long as a less universal-cosmical significance is attached to it than, *e.g.*, to the creation of Adam. If, however, He is really acknowledged as the second Adam, the beginning of an entirely *new* line in the history of our race,—in one word, as the man *from heaven*, not in any vague sense, but in the serious sense of the word,—then we shall ever afresh return to the confession, The Word was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, by the miraculous operation of the Holy Ghost.

7. The Soteriological *significance* of the fact in question, finally, is not difficult of proof. As concerns the voluntary Incarnation, regarded generally, in and through it we see a new, and indeed the highest, revelation of God given in and to man, a new communion founded between heaven and earth, and in consequence thereof a new creation begun. Thus we here stand at the close of a period of preparation centuries old, but also at the beginning of a revelation and fulfilment, which embraces as its object nothing less than the whole of eternity. Here, if anywhere, is the place to bow low before "the mystery of Godliness, which is great."—But the *manner* of the incarnation also is by no means a matter of indifference for the faith and life of the Christian; for by this the Divine greatness of the Lord is confirmed at the very beginning: what though throughout His life He walks in the lowly form of a servant, this beginning betrays Him as it were, and shows that He was originally more than man.—At the same time His human purity is here explained; already before and by His birth He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."[16] "It is not possible that He should save humanity, and yet say with David, I was conceived in sin."[17]—By this miracle, finally, the main demand of the kingdom of God upon all its subjects, renewal by birth of the Holy Ghost,[18] is set forth in a symbolical manner visibly before our eyes.—For all these reasons it behoves us to give due prominence, in a suitable manner, to this feature also of the miraculous history in the preaching of the Gospel; more especially at the festival of Christmas, if the latter is really to deserve this name.

Compare, in addition to the literature already mentioned, § xciv., our *Christologie*, iii., pp. 139—172. For the defence of the historic character of the history of the Nativity, F. GODET, *Comment. sur l'Evang. de St. Luc* (1871), i., pp. 129—151. On miracles, more generally, a good treatment of the subject by J. KÖSTLIN, *Jahrb. für deutsche Theol.* (1864), ii., pp. 205—271; L. BONNET, *Le miracle dans la vie du Sauveur* (1867). On the immaculate descent of the mother of the Lord, H. G. HAGEN, *De dogmate immaculatæ conceptionis Mariæ* (1856); PREUSS, *Die römische Lehre von der unbefl. Empf. Mariä aus den Quellen dargestellt*, etc.; and F. TURRECREMATA, *Tractatus de veritate conceptionis B. Virginis* (1870); very important for combating the new dogma of the Vatican.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Explanation of 2 Cor. viii. 9, and of Heb. ii. 16.—The idea of the Kenôsis in its legitimate application to the principal features of the Lord's life on earth.—Explanation of Isa. vii. 14, as compared with Matt. i. 22, 23.—Comparison of the Canonical accounts of the Nativity, with those of the Apocryphas.—Difference and connection between the two.

[16] Heb. vii. 26, 27; comp. § xciv. 5. [17] De Pressensé. [18] John i. 13; iii. 3.

genealogies of Jesus.—Historical development and comparison of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Lord, and that of His mother.—Connection between the controverting of the first-named, and departure from the pure idea of the Christian Revelation.—Degree of certainty, and limits of our investigation, in the domain now entered upon.

SECTION CII.—THE HOLY LIFE.

The holy life of the Redeemer upon earth reveals to us one continued blending of ever-deepening Humiliation, ever more severe Conflict, and ever more perfect Obedience. In each of these respects His life stands—not less than His voluntary Incarnation and His Surrender of Himself to the death of the cross—in immediate connection with the great end of His coming.

1. It cannot be regarded as the task of Dogmatics (§ xc.) to sketch, even in broad outlines, the holy life of the Lord. Yet as little can it agree with the one-sidedness which in earlier times often directed the attention exclusively to the coming and the last sufferings of Christ, as the absolutely necessary condition of our salvation, while the eye was scarcely in any degree directed to all that lay between. "In Dogmatics nothing ought to be taken into consideration, which does not stand in any relation to Christ as the cause of Redemption."[1] But of the three particulars here mentioned, it is not difficult to show that not one can be wanting, if ever Redemption or the Salvation enjoyed in the Kingdom of God is to be brought about for sinners.

2. By different degrees we see the incarnate Son of God advancing upon a path of ever deeper *humiliation*. Already the incarnation itself presents itself to us in that light, when we look at the deeply sunken age, the lowly place, and the humble circumstances of the birth of Jesus; and it is soon apparent that the humiliation will not end before the tragic close has been reached. We cannot forego thinking in this connection of His circumcision, by which He was brought under subjection to the law, and was held bound to fulfil it wholly;[2] of His being brought up in the lowly Nazareth, and of the obscurity in which He lived there;[3] of His baptism, by which He enters entirely into the communion of sinners, and receives the symbol of a purification of which He had no need on His own account; of His comparatively needy and ever unsettled life on earth;[4] of the voluntary dispensing with all the honour and joy of the world,[5] accompanied with the bearing of burdens, above which He more than any one might justly regard Himself as raised;[6] above all, of the constant failure to recognise His Person

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[1] Schleiermacher.
[2] Gal. iv. 4; v. 3.
[3] John i. 46; comp. Mark vi. 3.
[4] Matt. viii. 20.
[5] John vi. 15.
[6] Matt. xvii. 25, 26.

and Work manifested towards Him, not only by strangers and foes, but now and then also by relatives and friends; in a word, of all the dishonour which is put upon Him, and which attains its fearful climax in the shame of the cross.[7] If we combine all this, and consider that the Lord ever remained clearly conscious of His nature and dignity, we attain to a position for understanding, at least to some extent, the Apostolic utterance of Rom. xv. 3.

3. For Him who wholly voluntarily underwent it, this humiliation itself must have been the source of ever more *severe conflict.* Although without sin, the Lord was in reality tempted in all points;[8] and this temptation, far indeed from being a mere shadow, manifested precisely for Him an eminently serious character. In the spiritual domain, also, we see the darkest abysses near the sunniest mountain heights. It cannot be required of Dogmatics to explain at large the history of the temptation in the wilderness;[9] but upon good grounds it maintains the reality of the fact therein proclaimed, that the powers of darkness exerted themselves to the utmost to lead the King of the heavenly kingdom to become unfaithful to His vocation; and least of all may it overlook the peculiarity that, even after this conflict, the devil left Him only for a season.[10] Accordingly we clearly see the three temptations of the wilderness return in manifold forms in the after-life of Jesus, as they constantly display themselves in a modified form in the life of every Christian.[11] Let any one read, for instance, Matt. xvi. 1—3, 21—23; xxvii. 42; Luke xxiii. 8; John vi. 15, and other places. With the approach of His last hour of life, Jesus sees this conflict not diminish, but increase;[12] Gethsemane especially saw Him not only suffer, but also contend against the severest temptation to which any one was ever yet exposed; and only at the end of His life—after the most plaintive cry of anguish upon the cross—do we see this severe conflict succeeded by the tone of triumph (John xvi. 33; xix. 30).

4. And this triumphal cry might be heard, since the life of humiliation and conflict was, from the beginning to the end, a life of perfect *obedience.* The first two sayings of the Lord which are preserved to us,[13] display in this respect a symbolic-prophetic character. The fulfilling of the Father's will is for Him, in the full sense of the word, "meat," *i.e.*, His soul's food and the joy of His life,[14] yea, the true end for which He had come down from heaven upon earth.[15] We have already pointed to the perfect harmony of His inner life (§ xciii. 5), but that which here especially must not be overlooked is, that the Lord learned this obedience in the path of suffering, and therein by long endurance was made perfect;[16] *i.e.*, that He was raised not from unholiness to holiness, but from sinlessness to the highest perfection. His obedience was not simply made apparent in His suffering, but even through that suffering attained to a height to which it could not otherwise have risen. By the way of a merely moral path He has to reconquer, as it were step by step, the height of Supranatural glory, which He

[7] Heb. xii. 2.
[8] Heb. iv. 15.
[9] Matt. iv. 1—11.
[10] Luke iv. 13.
[11] 1 John ii. 16.
[12] John xii. 31; xiv. 30.
[13] Luke ii. 49; Matt. iii. 15.
[14] John iv. 34.
[15] John vi. 38.
[16] Heb. v. 8, 9.

had voluntarily forsaken; and this way unceasingly led through valleys darker at every turn. It is scarcely necessary to add that this obedience must at all times be regarded as an inseparable whole, even as it is accordingly always spoken of in the singular, in the Scriptures of the New Testament.[17] The doctrinal theology of the Church has distinguished between the active and passive obedience of our Lord—*obedientia activa et passiva*—and has ascribed to each a separate value in relation to the work of Redemption. On this last we shall hereafter have to speak; here we must now make the observation that the distinction in itself is extremely imperfect, since the very doing of the Lord was also to a certain extent a suffering,—His suffering, on the other hand, in some respects His highest form of action. His obedience is as the coat without seam, which may not be rent, and either avails wholly or not at all, for him upon whom it is conferred. The suffering of death on the cross is notably the personal deed, in which it attains a climax, above which nothing higher can be conceived.

5. If thus the holy life of the Lord on earth displays a blending of humiliation, conflict, and obedience in a union not to be broken, we cannot be surprised that, according to the doctrine of the New Testament, not only the Incarnation and the Death, but in connection with both, also this truly Divine-human life must be regarded as a source of Salvation to the world. Especially in the Epistle to the Hebrews and in that of John does this idea here and there receive prominence, and not without loss to the accuracy and completeness of our conception of the doctrine of Salvation has it been only too frequently ignored; for by this holy life of the Lord the foundation of the kingdom of God upon earth was laid. No doubt the New Covenant was founded in His blood; but this it could not have been unless such a life had preceded such a death. By the forming of the circle of disciples the first little church was gathered, which became the germ of the after one; and when the Son had manifested the Father to the men who were given Him, He could at the same time say that His task on earth was accomplished.[18]—To this life, moreover, we see attached the highest blessings of the Kingdom of God, the manifestation of the truth, namely, not only *by* Him, but *in* Him, the spotlessly Pure One;[19] and the Redemption from sin, without such a purity of the Redeemer, is inconceivable. Precisely by virtue of the power which proceeded from Him as such did the second Adam become a quickening Spirit,—yea, the *Author* of life in the proper sense of the term.[20]—By this holy life He Himself was sanctified to be for all after ages King of the Kingdom of God. Even the King of that Kingdom is not raised above the fundamental law of its constitution: that ministering love is here the necessary condition of true greatness, and suffering the path which leads to glory. By virtue of that which He here did and suffered, He is thus qualified to succour His people who are tempted.[21]—This His holy life, finally, presents to the subject of the Kingdom of God, as in a clear mirror, the

[17] Rom. v. 18; Phil. ii. 8.
[18] John xvii. 4—6.
[19] John xiv. 8, 9.
[20] Acts iii. 15; 1 Cor. xv. 45.
[21] Heb. ii. 16—18.

image of that to which they are themselves called. However often the conception of Jesus as an example has been misinterpreted or misapplied, it is nevertheless true that it has its foundation in the word of the Lord Himself,[22] and in that of the Apostles.[23] Definitely in point of self-denial, obedience, and love, does Christ remain the highest ideal for the imitation of all those who, once redeemed by Him, now in consequence of redemption have become bound to Him. But how could He be spoken of as such, unless His whole life on earth had displayed that exalted character which we contemplate with admiration? No wonder that the life of the Lord becomes in our age ever more the centre of the deepening conflict between belief and unbelief. If there lay between the manger and the cross nothing but an unwritten page, the loss would be incalculable. The question as to the historic reality of the image of Christ presented in the Gospels, has not simply an historico-critical, but also a religious and soteriological interest.

Compare the literature to § xciii., and E. NIEMANN, *Jesu Sündlosigkeit und heilige Vollkommenh.* (1866); C. E. LUTHARDT'S *Apologet. Vorträge*, ii. (1867), p. 55, *sqq.*, with the notes subjoined. On the Temptation in the wilderness, our *Leven van Jezus*, i., p. 569.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

To what extent can the Lord's life on earth be spoken of as at the same time a humiliation and a manifestation of His glory? (John i. 14.)—What humiliation is to be witnessed in His circumcision and baptism?—What is the sense of Matt. viii. 20? and of Heb. xii. 2?—To what extent can the Lord be said, even during His public life, to have borne our sicknesses? (Matt. viii. 17; comp. ix. 35.)—What is the real nature of the *Imitatio Christi*, and who are called thereto?—The indispensableness of the holy life of the Lord, and its insufficiency in itself.—Transition to the contemplation of His suffering and death.

SECTION CIII.—THE OBEDIENCE UNTO THE DEATH.

The perfect obedience of the Lord attains its culmination in the suffering of that death, which, according to the counsel and will of the Father, He endured upon the cross, wholly voluntarily, and innocent, with the clear consciousness and definite aim, that this death should be nothing less than the life of the world.

1. That the whole life of the Lord may be regarded as *one* great act of suffering, is, after all that has been said, self-evident. Yet the *limits* of the suffering in the strict sense of the term, the suffering of death, do not extend beyond the period reaching from the last evening of His life up to the hour of His dying. No part of His history is so fully and carefully

[22] John xiii. 14, 15. [23] 1 Pet. ii. 21; 1 Cor. xi. 1; 1 John ii. 8; iv. 17.

recorded by His different witnesses as this. They render it easy for us to follow the Master almost from hour to hour; from the Paschal chamber to the Garden, from the High Priest to the Procurator and the Tetrarch; by the *via dolorosa* to the Cross and the Grave. The Gospel affords not a single ground for the supposition that there must be attributed to some parts of this suffering a yet more special tendency and efficacy for the salvation of sinners than to others. Everywhere it presents that suffering to us as a whole, not separated from the painful death,[1] but most closely connected therewith, and of such nature that it can and must be only once endured.[2]

2. Far, indeed, from this suffering coming upon the Lord unexpectedly, He repeatedly *foretold* it, and that at a comparatively early time; at first more figuratively,[3] afterwards more definitely, and this last again with constantly increasing clearness and exactness. The history even mentions a particular period at which the annunciation of His sufferings properly speaking begins, followed by that of the Resurrection, which creates no small sensation.[4] The arbitrary assertion that all these predictions were only placed on His lips *ex eventu*,[5] has nothing to plead in its justification; while it places Jesus below a Simeon, a John the Baptist, and others, who foretold that the Messiah, in accordance with the word of prophecy, must suffer and endure contradiction. The Lord Himself laid great emphasis upon these predictions, and repeatedly appealed thereto,[6]—unless this also was all invented. Unquestionably His own consciousness of His approaching destiny was not developed all at once, but gradually, in the light of Scripture and of His own sorrowful experience; but the very peculiar expression by which—while yet in the middle of His public life—He designates the calling of His people to self-denial as a *cross-bearing* after Him,[7] in itself makes convincingly manifest that at that time at least the manner of His death was not for Him a matter of doubt. If the disciples afterwards entirely forgot the prediction of His resurrection, this also was because they had to the end obstinately rejected the prediction of His death as an unwelcome interruption to their earthly-Messianic dreams.

3. As the Lord foretold His sufferings at a comparatively early period, so had He *felt* the weight thereof in all its severity even long before. Even in brighter moments a certain trace of melancholy is not to be overlooked in many a word of His.[8] From afar the thought of His suffering troubles Him,[9] after His own consciousness thereof had been elevated to the most positive certainty by a heavenly revelation.[10] This emotion increases in proportion as that suffering draws nearer,[11] and attains its culmination in the anguish and pra yer of Gethsemane.[12] It was the natural consequence of His true and holy humanity, for which sin and death must be regarded as something *contrary to nature*, and reveals, in the way in which it is complained of and overcome, one proof the more of the Divine-human greatness.

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[1] πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου, Heb. ii. 9.
[2] Rom. vi. 10; 1 Pet. iii. 18.
[3] Matt. ix. 15.
[4] Matt. xvi. 21—23; Luke xviii. 31—34.
[5] Strauss and others.
[6] John xiii. 19; Luke xxiv. 44—47.
[7] Luke ix. 23.
See, *e.g.*, Matt. xi. 16—26.
[9] Luke xii. 49—51.
[10] Luke ix. 31.
[11] John xii. 27.
[12] Matt. xxvi. 38, 39.

4. That which the Lord thus clearly foresaw, and which even in prospect caused Him to shudder, He nevertheless endured wholly *voluntarily*. This is evident from His positive assertions,[13] and equally so from His bearing and actions. Think of the majesty with which He caused those sent to apprehend Him to fall to the ground; of His deeply significant silence, where with a movement He could for ever silence the enemy; of the neglect of every attempt at self-preservation, even where this would have been easy.[14] Everywhere in the Gospel, where the death of Christ is presented as the revelation of the highest love, the highest value is attached above all to this its voluntary character.[15]

5. "That here, according to the laws of objective and eternal right, a judicial murder was perpetrated, there can be no possibility of doubt."[16] The voluntary and terrible sufferings of the Lord were, in the fullest sense of the word, *innocent* sufferings. This they might not and could not be called, if the Christology of modern Naturalism were ours. From that standpoint the innocence of the Lord cannot possibly be maintained; and the Jewish council deserves rather to be praised than blamed, for having sought to impose the last restraint and limit upon so much fanaticism and rebellion on the part of the Nazarene. At most Modernism can only admit that His condemnation to death was the fruit of an embitterment perfectly explicable, and of a fatal misunderstanding. Something other, however, does it become where the Lord is truly held to be that which He asserted Himself to be, and where, moreover, all the traces of ignoble passion and boundless lawlessness in the course of the trial are observed. Innocent we call Him, according to the united testimony of enemies, strangers, and friends, not simply in the subjective but also in the objective sense of the word, and imply by this expression, not merely the absence of all that which would tend to justify His condemnation, but the actual presence of the opposite. With good reason does Holy Scripture lay manifest stress upon this His perfect innocence;[17] and this contributes in a high degree to shed full lustre upon the exalted manner in which that suffering is borne. Notably we here think of the firm self-control with which He avoids every word and deed which could tend to His liberation; of the matchless love here manifested towards His disciples, towards strangers, towards the instruments of His death, towards His whole nation and the world;—above all, of His obedience to the Father, His oneness of will with that of the Father, and His unwavering confidence in the Father, of which all even to His latest breath bears testimony.[18] No wonder that even the Rousseaus and Renans here rival the Fenelons and Pascals in their praise of Him who thus not only endured the pain, but also despised the shame of the cross.

6. If we come to Jesus Himself with the question *wherefore* He wholly voluntarily suffered all this, we hear Him most positively assure us, both in the first three Gospels and in the fourth, that He endured His sufferings in accordance with God's determinate will and counsel.[19] There is here a

[13] Matt. xxvi. 53; John x. 17, 18.
[14] Luke xxiii. 8; John xix. 11.
[15] John xv. 13; Ephes. v. 2; 1 John iii. 16.
[16] Hase.
[17] John xv. 25; Acts iii. 14; 2 Cor. v. 21.
[18] John xiv. 31; xviii. 11; Luke xxiii. 46.
[19] Matt. xvi. 23; xxvi. 54; Luke xxii. 37; John x. 18.

Divine *must needs*, to which no opposition *could* be offered without the abandonment of the most sacred vocation. In the mirror of the Scriptures the Lord had contemplated the image of the suffering Messiah; in the depths of His own spirit He had heard the voice which called Him to die sealed by Heaven itself.[20] Immediately after their public appearance as teachers, His first witnesses accordingly point to His sufferings and death as the fulfilling of God's eternal counsel;[21] and it was an illegitimate and uncritical use of an Anthropomorphistic expression, when, from a single remark in the parable of the wicked husbandmen,[22] it was inferred that God in reality expected His Son would be reverenced, and thus was to some extent disappointed by the event.

7. The moral *necessity* for the dying of the Lord, in connection with His whole activity, may be shown without difficulty. In the domain of nature and of history alike, the fulness of the inner life does not as a rule attain its complete development except in the way of death. The Lord Himself points to the image of the grain of wheat,[23] as a prophecy of His lot; and never would the Gospel of the New Covenant have been proclaimed effectually amongst both Jews and Gentiles, had not the wall of separation been levelled by the cross.[24] To such an extent the death of the King was indispensable for the foundation of the Kingdom of God upon earth; had He, after having said and done so much, withdrawn from the last conflict, He would therewith have sacrificed alike His dignity and the object of His life. But least of all would the blessings of the Kingdom of God have been prepared for the sinful world, unless the Good Shepherd had laid down His life for the sheep; and it is this Soteriological significance of His death, above all, with which Christian Dogmatics has to do.

8. Only a few utterances of Jesus Himself concerning the great *end* of His dying are preserved to us in the Gospels, and there is no reason in point of fact for supposing that He said much more on this subject than His first witnesses relate. Rather does it lie in the nature of the case that the full light thereon would arise only after His resurrection had taken away the offence of the cross. Yet these comparatively few expressions are sufficiently unequivocal to cut off even the possibility of misunderstanding upon this point. In the Synoptics He compares His life, which He voluntarily surrenders, to a ransom-price,[25] whereby not only a few but many are redeemed; and He declares that in His blood a New Covenant is founded, and that it is shed with the definite object that there should be forgiveness of sins.[26] In a figurative form we hear Him witness the same things in John. His death on the cross is as necessary for the life of the world as the brazen serpent for the wounded in Israel;[27] His flesh is a heavenly bread given for the life of the world;[28] only because the Shepherd gives up His life are the sheep delivered,[29] and He sanctifies Himself as a sacrifice for His people, in order that they also, in consequence thereof, may in communion with Him be sanctified unto God.[30] However

[20] Luke ix. 31; John xii. 28b.
[21] Acts iv. 27, 28.
[22] Luke xx. 13.
[23] John xii. 24.
[24] Ephes. ii. 14—16.
[25] λύτρον, Matt. xx. 28.
[26] Matt. xxvi. 28.
[27] John iii. 14.
[28] John vi. 51.
[29] John x. 11.
[30] John xvii. 19.

enigmatical all this may sound, it is apparent from it all that—according to the unequivocal utterances of the Lord Himself—the blessings of the Kingdom of God could not possibly have been conferred upon the world, so long as He had not laid down His life.

9. In no other spirit do the Apostles speak, of whom it can be shown that their doctrine in this respect is simply the development and application of the great principles which were expressed by the Master Himself. Peter also speaks of the blood of the Lamb as a redemption price, and ascribes to the exemplary sufferings of the Lord at the same time an atoning character.[31] Not the life, but the shed blood of the Son of God, according to John, purifies from all sins, and purchases those thereby ransomed to God as His possession.[32] Paul, especially, abounds in utterances of every kind, in which sin is presented as the cause of the death of the Lord, and its forgiveness as the great aim thereof.[33] According to his teaching, many—in consequence of the obedience here manifested—were made (constituted) righteous; in other words, were preserved from that which otherwise assuredly awaited them.[34] In the whole Epistle to the Hebrews no idea is brought so markedly into the foreground as this, that the Christ was at once High Priest and Expiatory Sacrifice.—The sense and force of all these utterances is presented in the Biblical Theology of the New Testament; and the benefit itself, derived from the death of the Lord upon the cross, must be later more fully treated of. Here we have as yet only to do with the proposition, that His obedience unto the death was in the fullest sense a *saving act;* and this cannot, after what has been said, be denied without openly contradicting both the letter and the spirit of the Gospel. No wonder that the preaching of Christ crucified is with Paul the main thing,[35] and that the Christian Church of all ages has found the true centre of the Lord's redeeming activity in His suffering and death. According to the testimony of experience also, the attractive power of the cross[36] surpasses every other in the spiritual world. Not the teaching and living Christ, not even the risen and glorified Christ as such, but the suffering and dying one, is, by the offering of Himself, the Author of our everlasting salvation.

10. The voluntary self-surrender of the Lord to the suffering of the cross ends only in His *death*, in which as well His humiliation as His obedience reaches its most terrible extreme. There is no single reason, upon purely historical grounds, for doubting the *reality* of His death. Friends and foes were equally convinced that He had really died; we hear Him declare Himself that He was dead,[37] and no single trace of doubt on this point is to be met with in the whole of Christian antiquity. Only the later Deism, Rationalism, and Naturalism has had recourse—in order to lend countenance to the possibility of a mere swoon (*Scheintoa*)—to the most romantic embellishments; with regard to which a Strauss at least was yet honest enough to say, "Of all this the originals give no indication, and we have no ground for supposing it." All that we know of the circumstances of Jesus' death and burial, along with the piercing of His

[31] 1 Pet. i. 18, 19; ii. 21—24; iii. 18.
[32] 1 John i. 7; Rev. v. 9.
[33] Rom. iv. 25; 1 Cor. xv. 3; Eph. i. 7.
[34] Rom. v. 19; 1 Thess. i. 10.
[35] 1 Cor. ii. 2; Gal. vi. 14.
[36] John xii. 32.
[37] Rev. i. 18.

side, produces in combination an impression wholly different from that of our seeing before us here one in a swoon, and dead only in appearance.—But the more are we struck with the *depth* of a humiliation, in which He, who Himself was the Life, is now at least for some hours the defenceless prey of death. He who regards physical death from its ethical side, and considers what the life of the God-man was, in unbroken communion with God, here recognises a mystery, comprehensible—yet only to a certain extent—for him who believes in the absolute self-surrender of love. In a certain sense it is more surprising that the Prince of Life was really dead, than that *such* a dead one should rise again. He, however, who asserts that Christ could be dead only subjectively, and not objectively, asserts in other words that His humanity was a mere phantom ; and that He willed indeed to give the highest proof of obedience, but was not *able* to give it. If this is absurd, we have no course open but to recognise this saving act as without doubt a *reality*, but a reality which calls forth from us the language of the Christian Father: *Mira profunditas, mi Deus, mira profunditas.*

Comp. H. E. VINKE, *Verzameling en Verklaring der uitspraken van Jezus en de App. betr. zijn lijden en sterven.*, Soc. of the Hague (1835) ; C. A. HASERT, *Ueber die Vorhersagungen J. von seinem Tode und seiner Auferstehung.* (1839) ; A. RITZSCHL, *Die neutestam. Aussagen über den Heilswerth des Todes Jesu*, in the *Jahrb. für deutsche Theol.* (1863), ii. On the certainty of the Lord's death, our *Lev. van Jezus*, iii., p. 388, and the literature there given.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

What internal evidences of truth are to be observed in the Lord's predictions of His death and resurrection?—Sense and cause of the prayer in Gethsemane.—Further elucidation of the principal utterances of the Lord concerning the object of His death.—Wherefore did He speak so comparatively little on this subject?—History and criticism of the denial of the truth of His death.—How *could* the Lord die, and in what connection does this death stand with the founding of the Kingdom of God upon earth?

SECTION CIV.—THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

As the deep Humiliation of the Son of God ended in His grave, so was the latter at the same time the transition to the state of His Exaltation. Put to death according to the flesh, but made alive according to the spirit, He also continued consciously to live during the state of separation, and made manifest to the world of spirits that He was the King of the Kingdom of God, the Saviour of sinners.

1. "Crucified, dead, and *buried, He descended into hell.*" With the treatment of this last Article, Christian Dogmatics may bring to a close its

inquiry as to the state of the Humiliation of the Saviour. On the burial in itself—spoken of by Paul as a separate article of his doctrine[1]—it may be brief. The circumstances of the burial of the Lord are known from the united testimony of the four Gospels; the truth of this historical account, particularly that of the sealing of the tomb—for reasons easily to be explained, denied—has been more than once sufficiently defended by the Apologetes, and the significance of the fact, in the light of the Gospel and of history, cannot be doubtful. As it is very justly observed in the Heidelberg Catechism,[2] by the Lord's burial, as it is recorded in the sacred narrative, the certainty of His death is raised above all reasonable doubt. Thereby His humiliation to the death of the cross is confirmed and completed, since He, like the meanest inhabitant of the earth, was laid in the grave of corruption. But, at the same time, the word of prophecy was in this way most strikingly fulfilled;[3] for the Christian is symbolised the putting off of the old man, by baptism into the fellowship of the Christ who died;[4] and the repose of the grave is hallowed for His people, as also His own resurrection and glorification is prepared for.

2. Longer must we pause at the so-called "descent into hell," which, in the Apostles' Creed, is most closely connected with the burial of the Lord? As concerns the *history* of this article, we find the conviction expressed even by the earliest of the Fathers—Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus, and others—that Jesus after His burial actually tarried in the world of spirits, and by some of them also that He there preached the Gospel; while the romantic manner in which this mysterious subject is presented in the Apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus is well known. Gnosticism, especially, warmly espoused this idea; according to Marcion, this activity of the Lord was directed to delivering the victims of the Demiurge, and leading them upwards with Himself. From the Symbols of the semi-Arians this much-debated Article appears to have passed over into those of the orthodox Church; according to some, with a view to controvert Apollinarianism. In the *Expositio Symboli Aquileiensis* of Ruffinus at least, this formula is found, and especially through his influence it appears also to have passed over into other confessions of faith; although it is remarkable that in the Nicene Creed mention is made only of "was buried;" in the *Symbolum Quicumque*, on the other hand, only of "descended into hell." It is manifest herefrom that both expressions were at first employed by many interchangeably, though very soon greater stress was laid upon the latter, and its contents regarded as the indication of a special remedial activity of the Lord. As the doctrine of Purgatory became more developed, the conception found wider acceptance, that the Lord had descended into the lower world in order to deliver the souls of the Old Testament believers from their subterranean abode, the *limbus patrum*. Especially under the influence of Thomas Aquinas was developed the doctrine of the Romish Church, that the whole Christ—as to His Divine and human nature—voluntarily repaired thither, to assure to the beforementioned saints the fruit of His death on the cross, and to raise them out of

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 4.
[2] *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 42.
[3] Isa. liii. 9.
[4] Rom. vi. 4.

this prison-house to the full enjoyment of heavenly blessedness.—According to Luther, on the other hand, who regards the *Descensus* as the first step on the path of the Exaltation, the Lord, after His being made alive according to the spirit, and immediately before His return from the grave, descended body and soul into hell, there to celebrate His triumph over the devil and his powers,[5] and to proclaim to them condemnation and judgment. The Reformed Dogmatics either understood the expression in the sense of "buried," or explained it of the penal anguish and dismay of the suffering Christ.[6] Some theologians, the Lutheran Aepinus, *e.g.* († 1553), even maintained that the reference is to the sufferings of hell, which He endured in His soul, while the body was lying in the grave. No wonder that the *Form. Conc.* declared this Article to be one, *qui neque sensibus, neque ratione nostrâ comprehendi queat, solâ autem fide acceptandus sit;* which, however, did not prevent its being possible to say on the other side, that "there are almost as many dissertations concerning the *descensus*, as there are flies in the height of summer."[7] Left by the Supranaturalism of the past century entirely in a misty obscurity, it was wholly rejected by the Rationalists, as the fruit of an exploded popular notion, to which—according to Schleiermacher—nothing but a fact entirely unnoticed by the Apostolic witnesses (*unbezeugte Thatsache*) served as a basis. Only in our day has the tide turned, and Theologians of different schools begun to return with increased interest—yea, with manifest preference, to this dogma; and to bring it into direct connection, not only with Soteriology, but also with Eschatology.

3. And this is rightly the case, inasmuch as this part of the confession has a Scriptural *basis*, as cannot—in the light of a purely grammatico-historical exegesis—possibly be denied. Even on the day of Pentecost,[8] Peter explains the words of Psalm xvi. 10 of the crucified Master, and Paul[9] proceeds essentially from the same idea. His words in Ephes. iv. 8—10 appear to have reference to the same fact, and especially the proof-texts, 1 Peter iii. 19—21; iv. 6, admit of no other interpretation than that the historic Christ Himself, made alive after His death for a higher spiritual existence, in the world of spirits proclaimed the Gospel to the unhappy contemporaries of Noah, who had perished in the flood. The Apostle speaks of this proclamation as beginning immediately after the death of the Lord, without actually determining whether it continued only until the period of His Resurrection, or indeed to that of His Ascension, both which particulars he mentions in the closest connection with each other in the twenty-first and twenty-second verses of this chapter. Just as little does he determine, whether the before-mentioned unhappy generation was the only one to whom this proclamation was addressed, or whether they were rather types of a whole unhappy class of men, upon whom this privilege was conferred. Nor does he say anything of the fruits of this activity, although it can scarcely be thought that this was altogether fruitless; neither does he directly or indirectly express himself as to the source whence he drew this knowledge. He does not even speak of this

[5] Col. ii. 15.
[6] Calvin, *Instit.* ii., 16; *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 44. Witsius.
[8] Acts ii. 25—31.
[9] Acts xiii. 33—37.

subject as a "mystery;" but rather presupposes that this also is equally well known to his readers, as are the events which preceded and followed it. All things taken into account, there remains for us no other choice than either to accept this mysterious fact, on the word of Peter and as he related it, or—what certainly is easiest—to reject it with a stroke of the pen, as pertaining to a sphere of Jewish superstition, and of a wholly antiquated conception.

4. For this last we have not the courage, so long as we recognise in the Apostolic word the fruit of something more than mere human wisdom. If we here find also no trace of special revelation, yet we must regard the Apostle's utterance as the fruit of his sanctified insight into the glory of Christ's appearing, in the light of the prophetic word and of the Holy Spirit. The less can we experience any difficulty with regard thereto, since the fact here proclaimed, however enigmatical in itself, is to be regarded as having an inner probability in its favour—yea, as in the highest degree worthy of God and of Christ. The Lord Himself had spoken of His sojourn in the heart of the earth,[10] and notably of being immediately after His death in Paradise.[11] If we think in connection with this last saying, as illustrated by the Jewish mode of conception, of the place of happiness in the world of separate spirits, we cannot regard it as inconceivable that He should thence have appeared even to the most deeply wretched "spirits in prison," still to carry out, after His death, that which had been the task of His whole life. Better than the just-mentioned Romish, Reformed, and Lutheran views—which all must find their necessary corrective in the word of Scripture—is that which we derive from the rightly explained word of the Apostle, designed and adapted to secure to this "descent" of the Lord, not less than to His resurrection and ascension, the character of a saving act.

5. It is comprehensible that this view should encounter *opposition* from two opposite sides, an opposition, however, which does not furnish a reason for changing our opinion. On the *rationalistic* side it has long been asserted that this whole dogma is fallen, and become manifestly altogether untenable, since modern science has deprived us of the nether world of antiquity. But if our conception with regard to locality is different from that of the Apostolic age, yet so long as it must be admitted that there exists a world of spirits in a condition as well of happiness as of misery; that also the spirit of Christ after His death lived and wrought *there*, where all the dead are assembled, and that it is not possible, in connection with this subject, wholly to exclude all notion of locality; so long will the modern Cosmology be compelled to concede to Christian Theology the right of believing that of the departed Lord also the words were true: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I also work."[12] In no case does the obscurity of the *how* justify us in disputing the certainty of the *that*.—And, as concerns the opposition raised on the side of *Orthodoxy*, which fears that the doctrine here proclaimed must necessarily lead to that of a restoration of all things: the question first of all is, whether Peter really teaches that which we have said, and whether any importance is to be attached to his word, or not. If it is, we are not

[10] Matt. xii. 40. [11] Luke xxiii. 43. [12] John v. 17.

responsible for the deductions which *may* perhaps be made from his word, but which yet do not necessarily follow therefrom. In any case, we hear him only speak of a particular class of unhappy ones, in a certain aspect an exceptional one, from which it does not yet actually follow that a conclusion is to be drawn with regard to all, and least of all with regard to those upon whom has shone already the light of the Gospel, which was as yet wholly unknown to the contemporaries of Noah.—Against this twofold opposition we still cling to the conception of an *appearing* of the departed Lord in the world of spirits—this expression must henceforth replace the "descended into hell"—and regard it as having been "neither a visit to the pious patriarchs, nor a spectacle presented to the devil, nor a new suffering, but better than all that; for the living a fresh manifestation of the inexhaustible grace of God, for the dead a supreme occasion of casting themselves into the arms of mercy." [13]

6. For more than one reason we attribute to this fact an abiding *significance* of a Soteriological nature. Where the axe is laid to the root of the whole Apostolic body of doctrines (*leerbegrip*), there naturally *this* dogma falls to the ground as a withered branch. Where, on the other hand, the Apostolic testimony is all along regarded as the great source of our knowledge of the person and work of the Lord, there is there no reason for refusing its assured place—beside the confession that Christ died, was buried, rose again, and was taken up into heaven—also to this, that He preached the Gospel to them that are dead. It is undoubtedly equally wonderful as the other, but it is also equally unequivocally proclaimed. Understood in the sense indicated, naturally every reason for confining the "descent" to the state of humiliation falls away; but so much the more confidently may we recognise it as the natural transition to that of exaltation.—That which we believe, on the ground of the Apostolic utterance, concerning the sojourn and activity of the Lord in the world of spirits, is one proof the more of the reality of His humanity, and of the certainty of His death on the cross.—It renders more distinct our knowledge of the person and work of the Lord; and affords us a new and striking proof of His majesty and love.—It convinces us of the vast extent and far-reaching consequences of the work of redemption by Christ, as availing also for the salvation of departed generations.[14]—It sheds a surprising ray of light upon a terrible judgment of God, and upon a mysterious eternity.—It confirms, above all, the fact that salvation is to be had in no other than in the only name of the Redeemer.[15] Those also who here, from no fault of theirs, have not known Him, must hereafter learn to know Him, or they cannot possibly enter into life. For the rest, in regard to all the yet unanswered questions, we may be most fitly reminded, that "it is sufficient for us, as the disciples of Christ, to learn those things only which He teaches us in His own word; neither is it lawful that we should presume to overleap these boundaries." [16] Involuntarily one thinks in connection with these things of the words of a Christian philosopher: "On this subject also it is wiser, after David's fashion (Psalm cxxxix. 18) to meditate on one's couch, than to write thereupon." [17]

[13] Reuss.
[14] Heb. ix. 26.
[15] Acts iv. 12.
[16] *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xiii.
[17] Oetinger.

Compare, on the burial of the Lord and the sealing of the tomb, our *Leven van Jezus*, iii., p. 400, *sqq*. On the descent into hell (Hades), J. L. KOENIG, *Die Lehre von Christi Höllenfahrt* (1842); S. K. THODEN VAN VELZEN, *Het Evang. aan de dooden verkondigd* (1845); E. GUEDER, *Die Lehre von der Erscheinung Christi unter den Todten* (1853), and Herzog's *R. E.*, vi., pp. 178—181; and further the literature given in the *Biblical Theol. of the N. T.*, § 27 (2nd edn. of the original Dutch, 1872).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

The truth and importance of the burial, and the sealing of the sacred grave.—What is the sense of Ps. xvi. 10, as compared with Acts ii. 31?—Criticism of the principal different explanations of Ephes. iv. 8—10; 1 Pet. iii. 19—iv. 6.—What errors arose, especially after the fourth century, concerning the "descensus"?—The opinions of the Reformers of the Lutheran and the Reformed Confession.—Under what difficulties does Calvin's view labour?—How is the 44th Ans. of the Heid. Cat. to be regarded?—What development does the latest history of this dogma present an example of?—Is it open to us (Schweitzer) to inscribe the whole subject in the list of myths?—What light here arises for us upon the universality of the Divine plan of salvation?

SECTION CV.—THE RESURRECTION.

The Christ who died for our sins, and was buried, returned—according to the irrefragable testimony of Apostolic Scripture—bodily to life on the third day, and was seen alive by His disciples. If ever this confession, on which the whole Christian Church is built, must be abandoned as absolutely untenable, all will at the same time be for ever over, alike with the highest glory of the Redeemer, as with the highest consolation of the Redeemed.

1. He who died and was buried, *rose again;* and Christian Dogmatics, also, must keep in remembrance this miraculous fact,[1] most of all in our time, in which there has been raised against this "pillar and ground of the truth" a storm of opposition such as has never been known before. The incessant but utterly ineffectual beating of the waves of unbelief against this rock of truth makes a sad though somewhat comic impression, but it draws at the same time our attention with heightened interest to that Rock itself.

2. As concerns the *idea*, first of all, which we are to attach to the resurrection of the Lord, but a few years ago it was almost superfluous to make this a subject of formal inquiry, because no one thought in connection with this word of anything else than a bodily resurrection. Now, however, it is otherwise, and the assertion is hazarded that the Scriptural expression, "raised from the dead," determines absolutely nothing with regard to the body of the Lord, but simply indicates that He, as to the Spirit, did not remain in Hades, but went into heaven. That the Apos-

[1] 2 Tim. ii. 8.

tolic testimony remains a stumbling-block and offence for modern Naturalism is easy to suppose; but at least it must not be allowed to remove this stone of stumbling by exegetical artifices. The particular mentioning by Paul of the Lord's burial; the express notice that He was raised on the *third* day, and the close connection in which he places this event not only with the immortality of believers, but also with their resurrection, proves here enough for him who is willing to see it. The Resurrection and the Ascension are in Scripture clearly distinguished from each other; and the mere confession—to which the theory of the opponents comes in the end—that Jesus, in common with all other pious men, enjoys as to His spirit an immortal life, legitimates not one of the conclusions which are drawn by the Apostles from the fact of His resurrection. In this state of things the choice cannot indeed be difficult, especially where it becomes ever again manifest as clear as day that "the most unfortunate attempt to combat the miraculous has certainly been the purely exegetical one, according to which, properly speaking, no miracle is ever intended in the text itself."[2] Nowhere is Rationalism weaker than where it will exegetically defend itself. Not simply that Jesus *lives*,—in however vague a sense,—but that He has bodily returned to life, and was seen of His disciples, is the kernel and substance of this confession. The conception of the resurrection cannot be worked out *à priori*, but is simply to be determined *à posteriori*, in the light of the Apostolic testimony.

3. As far as its true *nature* is concerned, the resurrection of the Lord is the miracle of the Omnipotence of the Father and the Son, in consequence of which the life voluntarily laid down was again fully restored; and He on the third day bodily returned from the grave to manifest Himself to His people in a condition of glorification already begun, and henceforth wholly and exclusively to live to God, without ever again dying. It is, consequently, alike the perfect restoration and the beginning of the glorification of the Divine-human life of the Saviour. The broken bond of body and spirit is again united, the unity of the self-consciousness restored, and an end is made to the material limitation, within which this life had formerly voluntarily confined itself. He who rises from the dead is not the man Jesus merely, but the God-man, during and after the state of death inseparably one with the Father, although the bodily veil was for a time laid aside. The condition from which the Lord returned to life is that, not of an apparent, but of a real state of death, although His flesh had seen no corruption. It took place on the third morning, according to the Lord's own prediction in Matt. xvi. 21, with which is to be compared xii. 40; so that it is evident that here also, as frequently elsewhere,[3] parts of days must be regarded as days. Raised up by the glory of the Father,[4] He Himself at the same time arose by virtue of the power of God dwelling in Him,[5] and with "many infallible proofs"[6] was contemplated by the eye of His disciples. His body was no illusion, but a real one; no mortal body, but one already in the process of glorification, of which henceforth neither the condition nor the law is known from observa-

[2] Schmid.
[3] Compare 1 Sam. xxx. 12, 13.
[4] Rom. vi. 4.
[5] John x. 18.
[6] Acts i. 3.

tion or experience; but one unquestionably entirely adapted to the new condition into which He was brought by the resurrection. Alike as respects body and spirit was He thereby for ever raised above all relation to the flesh; so that henceforth He no longer lives a life of flesh and sense, easily exposed to temptation, but one of absolutely unlimited and unbroken communion with God.[7]

4. The question as to the *conceivableness* of such a miracle, naturally turns upon the standpoint taken by the questioner. The Materialist and Naturalist *cannot* admit that one really dead should return to life, even though it were confirmed by thousands of witnesses; beside the everlasting and inexorable grave, he is able—under the yoke of his system—to raise no other psalm-tone than at best that of Psalm lxxxviii. 10—12. But the right to deny *à priori* the possibility of a miracle, if at least one still believes in a personal and living God, has never yet been proved; and from the Christian-theistic standpoint the doctrine of the Resurrection of Christ may be sufficiently justified by an appeal, as well to the pure conception of God as to the exalted personality of the Redeemer. Rightly does the Apostle[8] assert it to be impossible that He should be holden of death; He who was and did all that the Gospel testifies to us. When it is established on firm grounds that He died, it is for faith almost comprehensible that He should rise again. That which was unnatural for the Incarnate Word, was the laying aside; that which is natural in the higher sense is the restoration, the unfolding, the glorifying, of the life present in Him. Undoubtedly we have to do here, as in the case of every true miracle, with a mystery, but with a revealed mystery; and if the moment of the resurrection was witnessed by no created being, yet heaven and earth combined to prove the certainty of it.

5. The *denial* of this miracle has accordingly in all ages proceeded, not from friends, but from opponents of the belief in Christ and Christianity. Begun by the Sadducees,[9] we see it represented in the Apostolic age by the erring members of the Corinthian Church, and, as it appears, also by Hymenæus and Philetus,[10] afterwards by Celsus, Porphyry, Julian, and the calumnies of the Jewish Theology. In more modern times it was again a Jew, Spinoza, who became the leader of the hostile host;[11] and very soon the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw that camp vastly increased. The names of the English Deists, Woolston, Annet, and others; of the German Naturalists, Bahrdt, Venturini, the Wolfenbüttel Fragmentist, etc., have obtained a melancholy notoriety. More earnestly and scientifically has the controversy been conducted within the last few years. The names of its representative men are in every one's mouth; but as yet far from general is the honesty with which it is acknowledged by one of the most gifted and influential of them: "Christianity, in the form in which Paul, in which all the Apostles understood it, as it is presupposed in the Confessions of all Christian Churches, falls with the resurrection of Jesus."[12]

6. In this state of things it cannot be doubtful that Christian Dogmatics

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[7] Rom. vi. 10; 1 Pet. iii. 18; iv. 1.
[8] Acts ii. 24.
[9] Acts iv. 2.
[10] 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18.
[11] See his *Epist.* xxi. *ad Oldenb.*
[12] Strauss.

sees itself called to the prolonged *defence* of the confession of the Lord's resurrection, as in the fullest sense an "*articulus stantis vel cadentis Ecclesiæ Christianæ.*" In this respect there is an incalculable difference between the task of the Dogmatics of the period of the Reformation and that of the present century; that which was then acknowledged by every one, is now on all sides contradicted. But in connection therewith it must always be premised that this fact also is not to be defended entirely alone, but in connection with the great whole of Saving Truth; and that no recapitulation of merely historical proofs can gain over an unbeliever to the faith. But that which, as is shown from experience, is not sufficient to compel an adversary to yield the point, is yet by no means without significance for the defence of a fiercely assaulted belief. Something is already gained if it is shown that the difficulties on the side of denial are much greater than on the side of confession; and that a Modern theologian of our time had truth on his side when he wrote: "The unhesitating denial of the Resurrection, especially in the pulpit—in spite of the serious difficulties which exist, and in conflict with the belief of so many among the Christian laity—is the fruit neither of a scientific nor of a religious conscience."[13] With what good reason the language of exultation, "The Lord is risen indeed," is yet ever repeated, is apparent from a glance at a series of *witnesses*, who cannot be refuted; of *facts* which cannot be explained, on the supposition that the Lord remained in the grave.

7. Among the *witnesses* stands (*a*) first of all *Paul*, with his word, his conversion, his whole personality. In his first Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter xv. 3—8, (which is, without any exception worth mentioning, recognised as genuine, and as written in the year 57 or 58,) he reminds the Church of that which he had already proclaimed five or six years before, and which he himself had some time earlier—very soon after his conversion, therefore—received from a trustworthy source, amongst other communications, that of the fact of the Lord's bodily rising again; and he even holds himself most positively assured thereof, on the ground of a series of competent testimonies, to which also attaches that of his own experience.[14] There is not the slightest reason for regarding the "seen" (ὤφθη) of this eighth verse simply as indicative of a subjective vision, and then upon this ground for considering all the other appearances, of which he here makes mention, as such visions. The Greek word is also elsewhere employed of appearings which are apprehended by the eye of sense;[15] and that which we learn in the Acts of the Apostles of the disposition of Paul before his conversion, his experience in connection with his conversion, and the bent of his character after his conversion, justifies our here thinking of nothing less than an objective appearing of Christ, by means of which the truth was revealed to him not simply exte rnally, but also internally.[16] It is true, visionary conditions were now and then not unknown to him;[17] but he speaks of these in an entirely different manner from that in which he speaks here, and notably adduces as a mark of his Apostleship that he, equally with the twelve, had seen the Lord himself.[18] This conscious-

[13] Keim. [14] 1 Cor. xv. 8. [15] Heb. ix. 28. [16] Gal. i. 16. [17] 2 Cor. xii. 1, *sqq.* [18] 1 Cor. ix. 1.

ness is the power of his life, the source of his whole renewed personality, which cannot possibly be explained as the fruit of illusion and fanaticism. He who impartially contemplates Paul, *cannot* deny the resurrection of the Lord, unless by entering upon the "break-neck operation" of declaring all in these epistles which does not please him, simply to be spurious.

No less value is (*b*) to be attached to the testimony of *John*. If his Gospel is genuine—as there is sufficient ground for believing—then the twentieth chapter alone contains a number of small and delicate traits, which, for every one who is not smitten with an epidemic miraculophobia, raises above all doubt the inner truthfulness of that which is there related. If the last chapter is by the same writer, the proof is not a little strengthened. Yea, although the testimony of the Fourth Gospel were rejected, there remains none the less in undiminished force that of the Apocalypse, even according to the Tübingen school a genuinely Johannine writing. The seer here not only contemplates the glorified Christ, but receives from Him the testimony that He was dead, and is alive again.[19] As such He speaks and rules, promises and threatens;[20] and the opponents of the "resurrection-hypothesis," as it is now called, cannot do better than also to declare the last book of the New Testament to be un-Johannine.

(*c*) As concerns the testimony of the *Synoptical Gospels*, we naturally cannot here enter upon any extended historico-critical examination. But thus much is certain, even where the authenticity of Mark xvi. 9—20 is disputed; already in verses 1—8 of this chapter it is reported that the grave was found empty, and the resurrection proclaimed by an angel. He who, with many in our time, esteems precisely the second Gospel as the oldest and most trustworthy, must admit the value of this testimony. It is confirmed on every essential point by the accounts of Matthew and Luke. Especially is the narrative of this last concerning those journeying to Emmaus of such a nature that no other choice is left us than either to regard it as truth, or to see in it an artificial composition prepared with a special object, and meriting no other name than that of a systematic fraud. —No doubt there are single circumstances in the whole history of the third day, of which we are scarcely or not at all able to reconcile the accounts. But viewed in connection with the peculiarities of natural disposition in the first narrators, even that difference is a proof of truth and fidelity; and at most it can prove only the indistinctness of a single detail, not the untruth of the whole history itself. What would become of any history if only those facts were regarded as solidly established of which every particular was communicated literally in the same way by all narrators?

Yet (*d*) there here remains, after all this, the greatest and best witness, the *Risen One Himself*, whose whole personality, word, and deed, calls forth from us, on every detailed comparison with His previous life, the testimony, "It is the Lord." Precisely in connection with the brevity and mysterious nature of the accounts of the resurrection do the coincidences which present themselves make so much the deeper impression, in proportion as they are notably undesigned. A harmony like this becomes afresh

[19] Rev. i. 9—20. [20] Rev. ii. 8—11.

manifest, at every stage, as of too high a character to be the product of any forgery.

8. Among the *facts*, a careful review of which leads to the same result, we with reason place in the foreground (*a*) *the empty grave.* If anything at all is certain, it is that the grave was found empty on the third morning, and that already on the same day the tidings of the resurrection were spread in the circle of the Lord's disciples. If there is no single proof that the sacred body was removed by friend or foe out of its silent resting-place, then already does this empty grave, and the stone rolled away, testify in favour of the resurrection-miracle; and the question arises, How was it possible—not long after in Galilee, but—already on the third day, and in Jerusalem, in the immediate vicinity of the grave, to speak of Resurrection, if the Resurrection in truth had no existence?

In reality (*b*) *the belief of the disciples* cannot be explained, except on the supposition of a fact here having taken place, whereby their deep dejection of mind was suddenly changed into full certainty and high heroic spirit. "Only *the miracle* of the resurrection could scatter the doubts, which as it seemed must overwhelm faith itself in the everlasting night of death."[21] He who fairly places himself in their position after the death of the Lord, and therewith compares their entrance upon their public work only seven weeks later, will feel that we *cannot* get rid of the physical miracle of the resurrection, without supposing in place thereof a psychological miracle, at least equally incomprehensible. For it cannot be explained how merely the imperative necessity for believing in a resurrection of the Departed One could slowly lead His friends up to so firm and unanimous a certainty of belief, if no events had here occurred of a nature to render all doubt impossible. Or is bread produced merely by hunger, water merely by thirst? Was not the original state of mind of the disciples as far as possible removed from all ecstasy? And is this last to be expected in the case of more than five hundred persons of the most diverse temperament? Yea, are not many accounts of His appearings of such a nature, that here not merely excited imagination, but also deceit, must be presupposed, if the Lord did not indeed rise from the dead?

(*c.*) *The attitude of enemies* gives us further right to return to this question an affirmative answer. Already what they do, and still more what they fail to do, is here of great significance. The sealing of the grave; the bribing of the watch; the perplexed and helpless position they assume in presence of the first proclamation of the resurrection;[22] either all this must be historically open to suspicion, or it tells of an anxiety and perplexity, explicable only from the reaction of conscience against the superior power of truth.—So little does the old objection, "Wherefore did not the Risen One appear to His enemies or the nation at large?" tell against the truth of His resurrection, that Peter himself, unasked, takes it up and deprives it of its force.[23] The life of the risen Lord belonged, at least bodily, no longer to the earth; and His enemies had forfeited the honour of a new contemplation of Him. At best this would only have ministered nourishment to earthly-mindedness; but, with much greater probability,

[21] Baur. [22] Acts v. 28. [23] Acts x. 41.

have called forth renewed hostility,[24] for which in the end there would have remained absolutely no more excuse. To the enemies, therefore, must be preached that which the friends had contemplated; and, that the Lord was seen by at least one enemy, the name of Paul suffices to prove.

(*d*) Above all, *the founding of Christianity* among Jews and Gentiles, so soon after the death of the Lord, remains an enigma, which finds its satisfactory solution only in the miraculous fact of the resurrection. This answer to the well-known question of Apologetics:[25] "What is to be presupposed in the founding of Christianity by a crucified one?" has indeed been ridiculed, but not yet refuted or improved upon. On the contrary, an honourable Modernism confesses: "We are not able to comprehend how the Christian Church, with all its clearness of mind, and all its earnestness of moral purpose, could have been formed as the result of over-excited visions."[26] He who will compel us to believe that the proclamation of the risen Christ, the foundation of the Church, was properly speaking the fruit of the hallucination of an hysterical woman,[27] frees us indeed of the miracle; but at the expense of all that is rational, and of all belief in a moral government of the world, and this price appears, all things considered, too great.

If we *combine* all these reasons, and view them *in connection* with that which is further known to us concerning Jesus, we shall see ourselves compelled to grant, what even unbelief has been obliged to acknowledge, that no other miraculous account in the sacred narrative is so strongly confirmed as this; but at the same time we feel how boundless is the caprice which would remove this glorious solution from the history of the life of Jesus, to transfer it henceforth to the history of the Apostles and of their self-deception. If anywhere, certainly with regard to these "Abenteuerlichkeiten" (quixotic enterprises), the severe remark of Vinet has its application: "A new history is manufactured for us, in the interest of a new Theology."[28]

9. No one need feel surprise that we thus step by step defend a miraculous fact like this, since *its apologetic significance* is beyond all doubt. With the belief in the resurrection stands or falls (*a*) the appreciation of the *person* of the Lord. If He is not risen, then the supranatural in Him becomes eventually only a deceptive appearance; if He *is* risen, then also is therewith confirmed that which is highest and most glorious in His testimony concerning Himself.[29] The inner glory of His nature, hitherto concealed beneath the veil of His humiliation, unfolds and reveals itself, where He breaks the fetters of the grave, and shows what He really is.—Only thereby is now also (*b*) the truth and Divinity of His *Gospel* raised above all objection. If He is not raised, His witnesses merit not the slightest confidence: if He is raised, they are heralds of the truth and ambassadors of the grace of God.[30] He who declares that his judgment

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[24] Luke xvi. 31; John xii. 10.
[25] Ullmann.
[26] Keim.
[27] Renan.
[28] On nous fait une histoire nouvelle, au profit d'une théologie nouvelle.—VINET.
[29] Rom. i. 4.
[30] 1 Cor. xv. 15.

of the Gospel remains entirely the same, whether the resurrection of the Lord is a fact or not, thereby makes manifest nothing else than—that he has reflected but very superficially on the matter.—For surely (*c*) this miracle of the resurrection is, from an Apologetic point of view, in the highest degree confirmatory of the whole Christian *view of the world's constitution*, which not only presupposes and acknowledges the existence of the supranatural; but also the possibility of its manifestation in the course of finite things. If Christ is not risen, then also that which we speak of as new was merely a natural development of the old; if He is indeed risen, we have at least *one* point in history, in which the Divine is manifested as independent and supreme, in the midst of the dominion of sin and death; and precisely this manifestation of a higher order of the world may be regarded as at the same time the prophecy of its future triumph. It has been said, not without reason, by a talented apostle of unbelief: "So soon as I can convince myself of the reality of this absolute miracle, as Paul reports it, I will tear to pieces the Modern view of the world (*Weltanschauung*), and subscribe to the Symbolum *Quicumque;* this break in the, as I believe unalterable, order of nature, would be an irreparable rent in my system, in my whole intellectual world."[31] Certain is it, at least, that only as the Risen One can Christ be the King of the Kingdom of God, the Restorer of humanity. In principle this restoration is not only guaranteed, but symbolised and begun, by His resurrection; our view of the world may well be an elpistic one, because we know the point in the history of the world, in which has burst forth from death that life which no more can die.

10. The question, with what justice we regard the resurrection of the Lord, as properly speaking a saving act, has been in part answered in what has been already said. Viewed in the light of the Gospel of the New Testament, its *Soteriological* importance is placed beyond all doubt. It stands in direct connection (*a*) with the *justification* of the sinner, inasmuch as it impressed the seal of the Divine approbation upon the completed offering of atonement in the death of the Lord upon the cross. Hence it is that Paul exalts its value not merely to a level with that of the death of Christ, but even above it;[32] through this first did the certainty of the salvation in Him become manifest in heaven and on earth.—Of our *renewal* (*b*) into His communion, His resurrection gives us at the same time to behold the image and the ground. As Christ by His resurrection ceased to stand in any relation to sin, so do His people begin a life which is not the continuation, but the opposition, of the old sinful life; they can and must do so, because there proceeds to them from Christ, as the Raised One, a new power of life.—By the resurrection, finally, (*c*) the *glorification* also of His people is engaged for. Not simply the possibility, but also the certainty and the glory of the life of resurrection, is based on the restoration to life of their glorified Head on the third day. Where He lives, they cannot abide in death; where He is glorified as regards the body also, theirs shall not always be in a state of weakness and humiliation.[33] It is this hope which, as opposed to every doctrine of death, renders the

[31] H. Lang. [32] Rom. v. 10; viii. 34. [33] Rom. viii. 11; Phil. iii. 21; 1 Thess. iv. 14.

Gospel glad-tidings of life and incorruptibility. Let but the sacred grave have remained closed, and Christ is for us no longer the perfect Expiator of sin, the Prince of Life, the Hope of Glory. What now remains of saving truth? and wherefore should we any longer call Him the Lord, ourselves Christians? He who truly knows Him "in the power of His resurrection," feels at the same time that its denial deprives Him of nothing less than—all.[34]

Compare, on the resurrection of the Lord and its history, our *Leven van Jezus*, iii., p. 425, *sqq.*, and the literature there abundantly supplied. Of the Apologetic writings having a bearing on this main truth, the following deserve especial mention: J. I. DOEDES, *Diss. Theol. de Jesu in vitam reditu* (1841); G. REIFF, *Die Auferstehung J. als Heilsthatsache* (1845); J. J. PRINS, *De realiteit van's Heeren opst. uit de d.* (1861); the same, *De getuigenis van den Ap. P. aang. de opst. d. H. nader overwogen* (1863); the treatises under a similar, or nearly similar, title of E. GUEDER (1862), H. GEBHART (1864), W. BEYSCHLAG (1865), A. BILLROTH (1866), W. KRUEGER (1867). Especially also TH. GREINER, *Die Auferstehung Christi von den Todten* (1869), and A. STEINMEYER, *Die Auferstehungsgesch. d. H.* (1871);[35] W. BEYSCHLAG, *Die Visionshypothese in ihrer neuesten Gestalt* (1870); L. THOMAS, *La Résurrection de J. C., Etude Biblique* (1870), and others, too numerous to mention all, but sufficient to prove that Apologetics has as yet no thought of laying down its arms on this point.—On the Soteriological import of this event, a treatise of G. UHLHORN (1871), and one also of STAEHELIN, in the *Beweis des Glaubens* (1870), iv. and v. [CANDLISH, *Life in a Risen Saviour*, Edin., 1863.]

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

What is the grammatical signification of the words "raised from the dead"?—Is the genuineness of 1 Cor. xv. 1, *sqq.*, universally acknowledged?—Is it not possible here to understand a merely spiritual resurrection?—Do the sacred accounts of the bodily condition of the Risen One entirely agree the one with the other?—The resurrection in the light of the prophetic Scriptures of the Old Testament.—Main points in the history of the assailing and the defence of this doctrine.—Whence are we to explain the aversion of many for this miracle? and how is this aversion to be overcome?—What is the significance of Phil. iii. 10?

SECTION CVI.—THE EXALTATION TO HEAVEN.

The visible Exaltation of the Lord to heaven is the necessary sequel of his Resurrection from the dead; and, as a link in the chain of the facts of Salvation, can be estimated at its true value only in connection with the Humiliation by which it was preceded, and the Glory by which it was followed. In consequence of this event He is now, as regards the body, removed from the earth, but

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[34] Compare *H. C.*, Ans. 45.
[35] Further treated of in *Voor Kerk en Theol.*, ii. p. 160, *sqq.*

as regards His whole Divine-human nature, invested with a power and dominion in heaven and earth, which is figuratively indicated in the words, "seated at the right hand of God."

1. The exaltation of the Lord to heaven impresses the seal upon His resurrection from the grave; and we cannot be surprised that those who reject the latter also deny the miracle of the visible Ascension on the fortieth day. Yet the grounds, on which the historic *certainty* of this event rests, are by no means to be invalidated. By Luke it is reported in unambiguous terms, and with sufficient harmony as regards the main fact, as well at the end of his Gospel,[1] as at the beginning of the Acts.[2] Paul, to whose teaching this Gospel is allied, gives an account of the ascension in such wise as shows that he regards it as a well-known distinct fact, side by side with the resurrection;[3] and in the Epistle to the Hebrews it is brought, yet more than the resurrection, into the foreground.[4] Like testimony with regard thereto is given by Peter.[5] If the second Gospel was written under the influence of the last-named Apostle, and the genuineness of chapter xvi. 9—20 supposed, the narrative of verse 19 readily attaches itself to the foregoing testimony. Matthew relates indeed nothing as to the actual time of the ascension; but, in the parting salutation which he communicates,[6] there is notably heard the command of the King, whose glorification has already begun, to the heralds of the Kingdom of God. John also concludes with the resurrection; yet relates at the same time words of the Lord, which point to the ascension as a visible occurrence.[7] No one of the Evangelists aimed at absolute completeness in the narrative, and the silence of the one—explicable in various ways—does not invalidate the testimony of the other, so long as its genuineness and credibility remains sufficiently guaranteed.—So much the less was a detailed account here called for, since the ascension is in a certain sense the natural sequel of the bodily resurrection; no absolutely final, but only temporary, point of repose in the history of the Lord, which, according to the universal expectation, is to be immediately succeeded by His Parousia; a transition only from the condition immediately following His resurrection to the place of glorification awaiting Him. Had nothing been told us about the fortieth day, we should not need to doubt that He lived glorified above; but now we know from a trustworthy source that He was visibly exalted, we have no single reason to reject with distrust this satisfactory conclusion to the history of His life on earth. It is, even in its form and surroundings, the in every respect meet fulfilment of the Lord's own word in John xvi. 28. He who regards the Lord in the light of His own utterances, cannot possibly suppose that the Conqueror of death should have died a second time, and just as little that He should have left this world absolutely unseen. In order to be able to testify with perfect certainty that He was exalted, the Apostles must have seen with their own eyes the

[1] Luke xxiv. 50—53.
[2] Acts i. 9—11.
[3] Ephes. i. 20; iv. 10; 1 Tim. iii. 16.
[4] Heb. iv. 14; ix.
[5] Acts ii. 33—36; 1 Pet. iii. 22.
[6] Matt. xxviii. 18—20.
[7] John vi. 62; xx. 17.

miracle—not of His resurrection, but—of His ascension to heaven. To such an extent we may speak of this manner of departure by visible ascension as a touching condescension to the capacity and wants of the Eleven, provided nothing be therewith detracted from the objective reality of the fact, and its significance for Jesus Himself. In no case need an appeal to the law of gravitation stand in the way of our faith, since this law manifestly cannot apply to the body of the risen Saviour, already in the process of glorification. Just as little does the question, "whether heaven, then, lay immediately above the Mount of Olives," present difficulty to any one who feels how many an inept question is set aside by the timely intervening of the cloud on the morning of the ascension. It is not possible, we must repeat, altogether to divest ourselves of the notion of locality, and we know nothing—miraculophobia for the moment apart—which can be adduced against the idea that the Risen One was bodily and visibly received up into that *sphere* in which His life and condition is entirely in harmony with his inner, Divine-human nature, to a much greater extent than this had been or *could* be the case an earth.

2. If we form to ourselves the *idea* of this miracle, of which the truth can be duly maintained only in inseparable connection with that of the resurrection; we cannot possibly conceive to ourselves of the ascension otherwise than as a bodily *departure* from the earth. Notably it is placed in this light by Jesus Himself;[8] as also by Peter, where he declares that the heaven must receive the exalted Lord for a definite time.[9] In harmony therewith we have, following in the steps of the Swiss Reformers and their successors, to speak of a *migratio e loco in locum*, of a *visibilis disparitio*, in consequence of which a *corporalis absentia* here took place; and to confess that Christ, as to His human nature, is no longer upon earth,[10] *secundum carnem nunc abest, secundum Deitatem et* Θεάνθρωπος *adest.*[11] Thus we cannot but reject the old Lutheran view, according to which the body of the Lord, in consequence of the *communicatio idiomatum* (§ xcvi. 4), has become omnipresent. It is not here the place to enter upon the melancholy Ubiquity-controversy; and just as little do we need to overlook the difficulties which also beset the view of the Reformed Church, whenever this view is more deeply considered. But yet this merit must be conceded to the latter, that it continues to maintain with the greatest earnestness the true humanity even of the glorified Christ, which from the opposite standpoint must necessarily be somewhat infringed on. For the body which the Lutheran Church ascribes to the glorified Christ is no truly human body; since from the latter the attribute of locality is inseparable. The assertion that the body must be everywhere where the spirit is, bears the stamp of caprice; since not the spirit, but only the body, so long as it remains body, is bound to space. He who will here shield himself by an appeal to the omnipotence of God, deserves to receive the answer of Calvin, in the place in the Institutes just referred to, "Senseless one, what dost thou demand from the power of God? that He should make it to be at the same time flesh and not flesh? Just as though thou shouldst insist on His making light to be at

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[8] Mark xiv. 7; John xvi. 7, 28.
[9] Acts iii. 21.
[10] *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 47 and 48; Calvin, *Inst.*, iv. 17, 24.
[11] Beza.

the same time light and darkness."—"*Insane, quid a Dei potentiâ postulas, ut carnem faciat simul esse et non esse carnem? Perinde ac si instes, ut lucem faciat simul esse lucem et tenebras.*" Undoubtedly the Reformed view on this point is much more rational than the Lutheran, which in its consequences must lead to an irreconcilable separation between believing and knowing.

The Lutheran Dogmatics has accordingly in vain sought countenance for its view in the letter or spirit of Holy Scripture. In the promise of the Lord, Matt. xxviii. 20, He speaks just as little as in Matt. xviii. 20, of a bodily presence in the midst of His people; and in Ephes. iv. 10*b*, no other end is implied in His exaltation than that He should penetrate all things with His spirit, power, and life. "If we hold fast and maintain the idea of Christ's presence in heaven and earth as thus limited, we cannot avoid evaporizing and doing away with the individuality of Christ; for even a glorified individuality, a spiritual body, cannot be conceived of without limitations; and we are in danger of that error, which has so often appeared among Mystics and Theosophists, which loses sight of a personal Christ in the general life of the Godhead; of the Christ of grace and salvation, in a pantheistic Christ of nature." [12] It is scarcely necessary to add that, from this standpoint, the event of the fortieth day loses the character ascribed to it by the whole Christian Church of all confessions, the Lutheran alone excepted; from the Lutheran standpoint all is reduced to this, that the Lord at His ascension ceased to be as to the body visible on earth and to be confined to any place. What does the whole life of the Lord here below thus become, except a Docetic Christophany? The whole doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ's body rests upon the unprovable assertion that we must understand by *heaven* the absolute boundless space, the "*Allenthalbigkeit*," according to the maxim: "Dextera Dei *ubique* est;" while, we, on the contrary, have to think in connection with this word precisely of that *central-point* of space, where God reveals His majesty and glory in their highest lustre. One may make sport, as Luther does, of "the ridiculous heaven, in which stands a golden throne, and Christ sits by the Father, in a cope and golden crown;" but one does not raise himself above the *essential thought* in this conception, without losing sight as well of the glorified *God-man* as of heaven itself. He who will truly retain a Christian-theistic standpoint cannot but protest with all earnestness against the older and more modern Ubiquitarians, and the crypto-pantheistic or panchristic tendency of their system of thought.

3. The sitting at the right hand of God is the direct *sequel* of Jesus' departure from the earth; and, inasmuch as it is this, a new step upon the ascending path of exaltation. In the Confession of Nicæa (325) mention is made only of the "ascended into heaven;" but at Constantinople (381) the "seated at the right hand of the Father" was added with a view to completeness. The expression derived from Holy Scripture,[13] and constantly used, as well by Jesus Himself,[14] as by the Evangelists and Apostles, with regard to Him,[15] but employed with regard to no one else[16]—finds its

[12] Martensen.
[13] Ps. cx. 1.
[14] Matt. xxvi. 64.
[15] Mark xvi. 19; 1 Pet. iii. 22; Ephes. i. 20; Heb. i. 3.
[16] Heb. i. 13.

explanation in the well-known custom of Eastern Kings, of which we see the trace, *e.g.*, in the history of Solomon,[17] and in the petition of Salome.[18] While the placing at the right hand of the king was in itself the highest honour, even where it did not include in itself any absolute equality of rank or dominion; here it is at the same time the raising to the highest power and activity,[19] as unlimited as that of the Father, although ever derived and received from Him. However anthropomorphistic also,[20] the expression is intelligible enough, and is only a single time interchanged with "*standing* on the right hand of God,"[21] as being ready to help His servant. It implies nothing less than a kingly dignity, properly so called, received in consequence of the obedience unto the death of the cross;[22] and is accordingly never used in Holy Scripture of the Son of God *before* His incarnation, but only of the God-man after His Ascension on the fortieth day.

4. On the nature and extent of the kingly office exercised by the exalted Saviour, more in the following division. Here only the observation, that the *condition* which He occupies in consequence of this exaltation, is a condition of the highest possible glory and blessedness. This condition differs from that in which He was in the state of pre-existence. Not simply has the Son of God returned where He was before;[23] not simply is now a man, by way of apotheosis, raised to Divine splendour; but the God-man has, as such, for ever passed over from the state of Humiliation to that of Glorification. The humanity assumed by Him is here thus glorified in communion with the Godhead; without, however, the former being absorbed into the latter, or losing its own distinctive character. The original glory of the Lord's person is thus partly manifested, partly enhanced. It becomes now apparent who He, who once lived in deep humiliation, truly was; but at the same time He receives the homage which already belonged to Him as the Son of God, in the dignity of King of the Kingdom of God. His work, as such, far indeed from suffering by His departure, is by His exaltation advanced and extended. To that which He left behind Him on earth, He ceases not to stand in the closest relation; but at the same time He partakes, in the most intimate communion with the Father, of "the joy that was set before Him."[24] This can be no other joy than that of the holiest love, which counts it yet more blessed to bestow upon sinners everlasting life, than—after shame and conflict—to enter into the highest repose and honour. The life which He lives, He lives to God, without ever again submitting to death.[25] The last boundary-line of the Kenôsis has disappeared; and without any limitation, the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Him, as in a holy temple. Thus He, the glorified God-man, prays unceasingly to the Father, and sends forth the Holy Ghost;[26] so that He—to speak in a purely human manner—fills His place in the one, and yet threefold, nature of the Divine Being, with an honour increased by His previous humiliation. He enjoys,

[17] 1 Kings ii. 19,
[18] Matt. xx. 21.
[19] Matt. xxviii. 18; comp. John v. 17; x. 29, 30.
[20] Ps. cxviii. 16.
[21] Acts vii. 56.
[22] Phil. ii. 9—11.
[23] John vi. 62.
[24] Heb. xii. 2.
[25] Rom. vi. 10.
[26] John xiv. 16.

in a word, the glory and blessedness of the Head, under whom all is by degrees being gathered; so that His honour and joy must necessarily increase in proportion as the great prayer of His departing hour[27] approaches ever more and more to its complete fulfilment. Thus does this dazzling sun rise ever nearer to that meridian splendour, which is pointed out from afar in 1 Cor. xv. 28; and, of the glory which heaven already adores, earth has in the future yet to expect a final manifestation.

5. Where the condition of glorification displays such a character, and places the glorious crown upon the appearing of the Word in the flesh, it will not indeed be necessary to contest the assertion that Resurrection and Ascension stand absolutely in no immediate connection with the doctrine of the person of the Redeemer.[28] Just as little for the due contemplation of His person as for the just appreciation of His work can we dispense with this dogma, nay, this fact of facts; and the *significance* also thereof as a saving fact remains indisputable, so long at least as the Gospel of the New Testament continues to retain any title to make itself heard.—Regarded in relation to the Apostles, we see the formation of their character completed by the Lord's departure from the earth and exaltation to heaven, and themselves sufficiently prepared to receive the Spirit of truth, of love, and of power, who is henceforth to fill His place.—Placed in relation to the whole Kingdom of God, the exaltation of the Lord to heaven is the ground alike of the founding, the preservation, and the completion of His dearly purchased Church on earth.—Conceived of, finally, in relation to each one of His people, it stands in abiding connection partly with the peace, partly with the sanctification, partly with the hope, of believers. For the exalted Lord remains the heavenly advocate of His people, where they fail;[29] calls and powerfully attracts them to things above;[30] and went away to prepare for each of His friends a place in His Father's house,[31] and perfectly to triumph over all His foes.[32] (Compare *Heid. Cat.*, Answer 49.)

Compare, on the credibility of the history of the Ascension, our Apologetic treatise in the *Godgel. Bijdr.* (1843), pp. 526—578; *Leven van Jezus*, iii., p. 617, *sqq.*; *Christologie*, iii., p. 321, *sqq.* On the subject itself, the article *Himmelfahrt*, in Herzog's *Real-Encl.* vi. (from which it is manifest, *inter alia*, that Augustine by his argument favours not the Lutheran, but the Reformed view); C. G. KNAPP, *De Jesu Chr. ad dextram Dei sedente*, in his *Scripta varii argum.*, p. 49 (1823); H. G. HASSE, *Das Leben des verklärten Erlösers im Himmel* (1854); G. REICH, *Die Himmelfahrt Jesu, als Heilsthatsache*, in the *Theolog. Zeitschrift* of DICKHOFF (1862); A. H. GREVE, *Die Himmelf. unseres Herrn J. C. verstanden nach ihrer wahren Geschichte und Lehre, u. s. w.* (1868, strongly Lutheran). For the practical appreciation of this miraculous fact, the beautiful discourse of ALEX. VINET, *Jésus invisible*, in his *Etudes Evangeliques* [Eng. trans.] may be read with advantage.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

May the two accounts of Luke concerning the ascension of the Lord be satisfactorily harmonised?—What judgment must we form with regard to the Natural and the Mythical explanations of this miracle?—The doctrine of a plurality of ascensions of Jesus in its older and more modern form.—The controversy as to the true explanation of Acts iii. 21.—What is taught in Phil. ii. 9—11?—What is the sense of Ephes. iv. 8—10?—The

[27] John xvii. 20—24.
[28] Schleiermacher.
[29] 1 John ii. 1.
[30] Col. iii. 1—4.
[31] John xiv. 2.
[32] Heb. x. 13.

"infaustum certamen"[33] on the Ubiquity.—How is the non-recognition of the miracle of the Resurrection and the Ascension on the part of Schleiermacher to be accounted for?—Further comparison between the pre-existence and the post-existence of the Lord.—To what extent is the belief in the visible exaltation and the heavenly glory of its King indispensable for the spiritual life of the Church?

SECTION CVII.—THE COMING AGAIN OF CHRIST.

The Christian belief in the coming again of Christ is the expression of the well-grounded expectation, that He will ever increasingly make manifest before every eye the splendour of His dominion, and one day visibly appear as King of the Church, and Judge of the world, for ever to end the present dispensation, and to complete, in a manner worthy of Himself, the Kingdom of God founded by Him.

1. The last step in the path of Exaltation is the coming of Christ again to judgment. In all the Œcumenical Symbols mention is made thereof by name, as also in the Heidelberg Catechism, question 52, and the Netherlands Confession, article xxxvii. In the New Testament this prospect is distinctly presented on almost every page; and in Christian Dogmatics it forms nothing less than the corner-stone of the Eschatological structure. It is true that to that last chapter also belongs the treatment of those great changes, which faith looks for at the consummation of the ages. The Parousia itself, however, which is the cause and centre of these changes, must not receive its explanation there, but here; inasmuch as in its nature and essence it belongs entirely to the Christological and Soteriological domain, and in itself may be termed the last of those Saving Acts, to which our attention is here directed. While we saw at an earlier period (§ c.) how the Son of God, even before His Incarnation, was occupied with the salvation of sinners, the circle now returns to its point of departure, and the question arises, In what form are we to conceive of the end, the issue of this activity, and, in connection therewith, of the condition of Him, who fulfils it according to the will of the Father? Here, if anywhere, the support of imagination and experience fails us, and we see ourselves almost exclusively thrown back upon the Prophetic word, with its yet unsolved enigmas. The Symbolical Writings, also, in their cursory mention or treatment of this Advent always frame their language upon that of the Bible; and only the event itself can here cause the last veil to fall from before our eyes. All that we can do is—with the avoiding of a one-sided Spiritualism on the one hand, and of a gross Materialism on the other—to seek after the pure conception of the subject, which for the hope of faith is of essential importance.

[33] Calixtus.

2. The precise *idea*, which we have to form to ourselves of the Lord's coming, can be gained only from the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament. Even in the Prophets mention is frequently made of a day of the Lord, a day, that is, in which Jahveh makes manifest His glory in the deliverance of His people, the chastisement of His foes, and the maintenance of His government of the world. Notably also the Son of Man is said[1] to come with the clouds of heaven, *i.e.*, to reveal Himself in this His character; and we cannot be surprised that the Lord, arising in the full consciousness of His Messiahship, repeatedly makes mention of His day, or one of His days.[2] Nevertheless, it soon becomes apparent that the places in which Jesus speaks of His coming, can by no means be always understood in the same sense; but, on the contrary, are used now in a more realistic, now in a more spiritual sense, and indicate now an event close at hand, now one far distant. Compare, for instance, Matt. x. 23; xvi. 28; John xiv. 3; xxi. 22, and other places. Nevertheless, one unchangeable idea underlies all these separate promises. Christ is said to come whenever He *makes manifest* His glory, as King of the Kingdom of God, in enhanced splendour before the eyes of all. This He did in its initial stage during His life on earth, but yet much more after His exaltation to heaven; in the destruction of Jerusalem, for example, in the fall of Heathendom, and in the Reformation of the Church; and it is the task of an exact exegesis to determine with regard to every place in the New Testament (where this is demanded) in what sense precisely *there* a coming of the Lord is spoken of. It very soon appears in this case, that it is wholly in the spirit of the Lord and His Apostles, if we think in connection therewith of a bright manifestation of His kingly glory, upon an ever greater scale; so that every coming contains within itself, as it were, the germ of a new and yet more glorious coming. In a certain sense the Christ may be said to come in our day also, whenever in the midst of great world-catastrophes He establishes and extends His kingdom. Yet all this coming is simply the prophecy of a last, all-deciding final-manifestation, which constitutes not only the product, but also the end, of the present development; and renders evident before the eyes of all, that which His Church believes, namely, that He is truly exalted and invested with all power.

In speaking of the coming of the Lord, we have thus to guard against a double one-sidedness. On the one hand, the opinion of those who keep the eye so exclusively on the consummation of the ages, that there is scarcely left a place for preceding manifestations, by means of which the end is prepared. On the other hand, the idea that the Lord unceasingly comes; without, however, it being possible to say that He will yet one day *return*. From the former standpoint no other judgment of the world was recognised, than the final judgment alone. From the latter, the history of the world is rightly regarded as a constant judgment of the world; but what is overlooked is, that this judgment yet cannot on that account be spoken of as the final judgment. We must have to do with a conception of the Parousia of the Lord, in which the truth and value of His constant coming is fully acknowledged; but besides, and beyond all this,

[1] Dan. vii. 13, 14. [2] Luke xvii. 22; John viii. 56.

we have to take into our account the glory of that period in which He shall *so* come, in like manner as His disciples had seen Him go away into heaven.[3]

3. That the New Testament *really* teaches such a visible final coming again, cannot be seriously denied. The Lord repeatedly says that He shall appear in splendour, and visible to the eyes of all—in a glorified body, therefore—upon the clouds of heaven, in the full radiance of His kingly majesty.[4] He compares Himself to a nobleman who goes away in order to receive a kingdom, and then again to return.[5] In other parables, also, He gives us to understand the same thing ;[6] and His last prolonged discourse, Matt. xxiv., xxv., is devoted to the unveiling of the mysteries of the future. If this idea is especially prominent in the first three Gospels, in the fourth also it is by no means wanting ;[7] and, in whatever other respects the Apostles may differ, on *this* point they are wholly of accord. Peter[8] here expresses no other expectation than does Paul ;[9] the Epistle to the Hebrews,[10] than that of James[11] and of Jude ;[12] John, in his Epistle,[13] than in the Apocalypse.[14] With all difference in form, the substantial contents of the expectation are the same ; and scarcely can one mention another dogma, in regard to which—yet once more, as far as the main thought is concerned—so striking a *Consensus* of all Prophetic and Apostolic voices can be shown, as in regard to this. The solemn *Maran Atha* resounds throughout the whole of Holy Scripture. Notably a last coming is promised, not visible for the eye of faith alone, but for believers and unbelievers together ; a fact which—heralded by a number of premonitory signs—takes place, unexpectedly, but not without the way being first prepared for it, and is in its nature and consequence of universal-cosmical importance ; a Saving Act, in a word, which will at the same time be the highest Saving Benefit for the now completed Kingdom of God.

4. The firm *ground* for the belief thus sketched out is accordingly definitely afforded in the word of Scripture, which here also "cannot be broken."[15] Utterances like those we have just listened to, cannot possibly be removed from the Gospel by means of a destructive-critical process ;[16] and just as little can they be explained of those events alone which happened in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem. Though we should surrender the prospects of Prophet and Apostle, the word of Jesus Himself yet remains to be dealt with ; and with regard to that, the saying of Luthardt is unreservedly true : "This word He has in fact spoken ; but it is a word of which there is no other example. Even the mad pride of Roman Emperors, who demanded religious homage for their statues, has never gone so far as to conceive such an unheard-of thought ; and here it is the lowliest among men who speaks. This word *must* be truth ; for there is here no mean term between truth and madness." The utterances of

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[3] Acts i. 11.
[4] Luke xvii. 24 ; Matt. xxiv. 30 ; xxv. 31.
[5] Luke xix. 12.
[6] Matt. xiii. 40, 41, 49 ; Luke xviii. 8.
[7] John v. 28, 29 ; vi. 40, 54 ; xxi. 22.
[8] Acts iii. 20.
[9] 2 Thess. i. 10.
[10] Heb. ix. 28.
[11] James v. 8.
[12] Jude 14, *sqq.*
[13] 1 John ii. 28.
[14] Rev. i. 7.
[15] John x. 35.
[16] Colani, Scholten.

the Lord concerning His Parousia are, above all, not less manifold and powerful than those which relate to His heavenly origin and dignity. With what right shall the former be set aside, while the latter are allowed to remain in force?

5. Inner grounds of probability add yet greater significance to the ground of certainty already mentioned. If the Lord is indeed highly exalted (§ cvi.), it cannot but be the case, that this glory should eventually be manifested before the eyes of all; and it is exceedingly worthy of God, that the same earth which witnessed His deep humiliation, should also become the scene of His manifested glory. If He still continues to maintain a personal and truly spiritual relation to the Church and the world, wherefore should not here also, "embodiment in outward form," be "the end of the ways of God"?[17] Certainly if Naturalism is right, and His history closes with the ordinary "buried," all that Christology further teaches must then be relegated to the domain of Pneumatology, or rather to that of imagination. But if He personally lives and reigns unto eternity, then the King cannot permanently remain invisible, in the case where the Kingdom is everywhere established; and just as little, from the nature of the case, can this appearing be anything else than a final judgment. The expectation of so great a catastrophe—whatever enigmas and questions it may leave unanswered—is, for man's reason itself, much more satisfactory than that of an everlasting continuance of the present economy, a sort of *progressio in infinitum*, or indeed a long-continued dying out of the creation. "Speculation has so little to object to the Christian conception of the world-catastrophe, that rather—if there were no Eschatological doctrine—it must supply this lack."[18] History and Experience even, give every reason to doubt whether, without such personal appearing and intervention of the King Himself in the course of things, the Kingdom of God could indeed *ever* arrive at the complete development and triumph, to which it is designed it should come. It is with this doctrine as with that of the Creation and the Beginning of all things—in its ultimate character equally incomprehensible, but also equally indispensable. That here nothing less than a miracle is to be looked for, we acknowledge; but no miracle out of any historical connection with all that has preceded; and—if anywhere—here the word of a Christian philosopher finds its application: "Just as little as the law of gravitation prevents the bird from flying, just so little is the heaven of Copernicus or of Herschell opposed to the Ascension (or the Coming Again) of Christ. Where higher forces and laws come into play, the lower ones naturally recede."[19]

6. From this standpoint the *objections* brought against this last stadium in the path of Glorification, may at least to a certain extent be answered.—If it is said, that this article of faith is in conflict with reason and the Modern view of the world; let it be remembered that these also, with equally great, or—equally little justice, set themselves against the doctrine of the Incarnation of the Son of God, of particular Revelation, yea, even of the Creation, and of the personal Divine government of the world. Concerning the termination of the world's history, we know, by our own

[17] "Leiblichkeit ist das Ende der Wege Gottes." [18] Nitzsch. [19] Auberlen.

research, absolutely nothing; yet precisely on that account has a higher light been kindled for us in the word of truth.—If any one sees here only a result of the Jewish Messianic expectation, he forgets that this expectation also—as far as its kernel and essence is concerned—rested upon the word of Prophecy; and that for us the first question is not what the contemporaries of the Lord expected, but what the mouth of truth itself has testified.—If it is asserted that the doctrine of the New Testament on this point is, for the most part, veiled in figurative language, and cannot easily be combined into a compact whole, we shall not contradict the former assertion, provided it is acknowledged that this figurative language is the garb of a glorious thought of God; and must observe with regard to the other, that, with all difference of detail, this thought of God is in germ and essence unchangeably one with all Prophets and Apostles. All the Apostolic exhortations and consolations are so closely connected with the prospect of the personal return of the Lord, that whoever contradicts this last, thereby takes away the roof and cornice from the structure of the Apostolic Theology.—If it is observed that, nevertheless, the expectation of the Apostolic age as to a speedy Parousia has not been fulfilled: we reply that the Lord Himself left the time absolutely undetermined, yea, not obscurely pointed to the possibility of delay;[20] that His disciples never expressed their individual impression on this point otherwise than in a conditional manner; and that the prospect itself remains unchanged, although its fulfilment is deferred to later ages.[21] "If also the Apostolic Church has erred *empirically*, [*i.e.*, in computing the time of its fulfilment,] it has not erred *dogmatically*.[22]—And if, finally, we are reminded of so much sickly chiliastic abuse to which this hope has been subjected; no other answer is to be expected, than that the wise God cannot possibly be held responsible for the folly of men, and that at least just as little good is to be hoped for from the forgetting or contradiction of this expectation.

7. For this hope of faith is of a *significance* not to be overlooked, alike for our theological *thinking* as for our Christian *life*. The former finds in this hope a point of repose which it cannot possibly dispense with, and which it is equally impossible to meet with better elsewhere. All true Theology is at the same time Teleology, which must of itself lead to Eschatology. With this ultimate point before our eyes, we see the Yonside as well as the This-side unceasingly pressing forward towards that great epoch, at which the limit between the two vanishes away.—"Only from the point of view of Eschatology can we understand aright the problems of the human life; for only when we recognise what is the *final* aim of life and being, can we also set forth the goal to all the efforts of man. Therefore it has been said from an early period: *Respice finem*."[23]—But also for the consolation and sanctification of the Church is this doctrine of inestimable value, especially in times of conflict and oppression. Of the life of watchfulness, patience, and heavenly-mindedness it is the soul and power;[24] and history makes abundantly manifest, that where this prospect has tem-

[20] Matt. xxiv. 14; xxv. 19.
[21] Compare P. i., p. 205.
[22] Martensen.
[23] Martensen.
[24] Luke xii. 35—48.

porarily receded in the Christian consciousness, the spiritual life also has declined. One may confidently say that to a healthy Christian life "Etwas Apocalyptisches" (something of an Apocalyptic nature) also belongs;[25] and that the obligation to observe the signs of the times cannot possibly be fulfilled, so long as the question as to the final Whither has not, at least in principle, received an answer. Only we must be on our guard lest, from any unhealthy longing and craving after the *Status gloriæ*, we overlook the earnest claims of the *Status humilitatis*, the state in which faith lives and moves during the present dispensation. The blessedness of the future is simply the crown of that stem which has sprung forth from the Saving Act of Christ; and no Eschatological hope is well-grounded, but that which is the fruit of living faith in those Saving *Benefits*, upon the contemplation of which we have now to enter.

Compare the principal commentaries or monographs on the Eschatological discourses of the Lord, in Matt. xxiv., xxv.; our treatise on the Eschatological expectations of the Apostle Paul, *Jaarbb.* ii. (1845), pp. 49—99; E. SARTORIUS, *Die Wiederkunft Christi zum Gericht* (1824); LANGE'S Article, *Wiederk. Christi*, in Herzog, *R. E.*, xviii., with the literature there mentioned. See further under chapter vii.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Further elucidation of the different senses in which the New Testament speaks of the *Coming* of the Lord.—Are there sufficient grounds for maintaining the Authenticity and Axiopistia of the Eschatological discourses of Jesus, even in presence of the latest opposition?—Is it conceivable that on this point the Lord was either Himself deceived, or accommodated Himself to the erroneous belief of the age?—How is the Apostolic expectation of an immediately impending Parousia to be explained and judged of?—Review of the principal variations in the history of this article.—Is the 52nd Answer of the *Heidelberg Catechism* (compare *Neth. Confess.*, Art xxxvii.) to be blamed, excused, or praised?—What is the true "loving of the appearing of Jesus Christ"? (2 Tim. iv. 8b.)

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[25] V. d. Hoeven, Junr.

SECOND DIVISION.

THE SAVING BENEFITS.

SECTION CVIII.—THE THREEFOLD OFFICE OF CHRIST.

IN order to review in their totality the Saving Benefits enjoyed in the Kingdom of God, and duly to appreciate them in their connection with the Saving Work of the Redeemer, a new division of the copious material before us is imperatively necessary. The distinction of the threefold office of Christ, as Prophet, High Priest, and King, although not free from all objection, has however, as compared with others, much to recommend it, and may on this account fitly serve as the basis of the examination now following.

1. The contemplation of the saving deeds of Christ, has already led us to, and prepared us for, that of the various saving benefits, of which the Christian faith recognises Him as the mediate cause. Undoubtedly the benefit of Redemption, viewed in the light of the Gospel, forms a fair and glorious whole; but this whole is so copious, and thereby manifests itself to our eyes on so many different sides, that the unity can be duly apprehended only after the necessary justice has been done to the manifold character and fulness of the Salvation in Christ. Hence a division in the plenteous material has been frequently planned. Thus, for instance, mention was made of the Salvation which Christ has already brought, is yet bringing, and will one day more perfectly bring, at the consummation of all things. Or again, of that which we owe to the Doctrine, the Life, the Suffering and Death, the Resurrection and Exaltation of the Lord. There is no single division which does not present its weaker side. Things into which Angels also desire to look,[1] cannot be summed up in *one* form of human thinking, in such wise that full justice shall be done to each part of the whole. The outline above alluded to, derived from the doctrinal formula of the *Munus Triplex*, seems to present the greatest advantages. While we have hitherto followed the Lord step by step on the path of Humiliation and Exaltation, and have inquired with regard to every particular as to its Soteriological tendency; now we have to combine all these particulars, and to sketch forth the salvation in Christ, in such wise, however, that our reverent attention may at the same time ever again be fixed upon the activity itself of Him who once brought it, and still confers it.

2. One word we must here say on the *history* of the doctrinal formula

[1] 1 Pet. i. 12.

which now forms our starting-point. The distinction between the Prophetic, the High-Priestly, and the Kingly office of Christ was indicated by Eusebius in his day;[2] in Cyril of Jerusalem, also,[3] and Augustine[4] are found traces thereof; the same is the case also with Peter Chrysologus, Thomas Aquinas, and others. Although in the last-named of these the words *munus* and *officium* do not occur, yet he distinctly presents Christ as *Legislator*, *Sacerdos*, *et Rex*. Scholasticism, however, showed no special preference for this doctrinal form, neither does the Romish Church as a rule employ it, although Cardinal Bellarmine does not actually disapprove thereof. Just as little is it met with in Luther and Melancthon, though certainly in Calvin,[5] by whom it may be said to have been introduced as a standard expression in the Dogmatics of the Reformed Church.[6] In the Lutheran Church, on the other hand, this division was brought into favour by J. Gerhard, and was for a while in pretty general use. After the previous opposition of the Socinians, however, it was, in 1773, assailed by T. A. Ernesti, in a Programma *De officio Christi triplici*.[7] He pointed out that the doctrinal structure rested upon an insecure exegetical foundation; since in Holy Scripture the name of Christ, or anointed, given to the Saviour, exclusively indicates His Kingly dignity. Through his influence, with that of others, this doctrinal form by degrees fell into disuse, although Michaëlis and some few others remained true to it, until Schleiermacher brought it again, with increased distinctness, into the forefront. Following in his footsteps, men like Nitzsch, Martensen, Lange, Ebrard, Schweitzer, and Luthardt have again taken up the defence of this doctrine. In Holland the distinction of the threefold office of Christ has—in harmony with earlier theologians—been especially favoured by Scholten.[8]

3. Undoubtedly this doctrinal form also, like so many others, has its weaker sides. Christ Himself spoke of Himself only as King; but never as Priest, and only indirectly as Prophet.[9] The name Messiah, employed of Him, indicates originally neither more nor less than the King promised by the prophets, and not without a certain freedom is this consequently brought into connection with His prophetic and priestly activity. Although it is clear that under the Old Covenant the priests were anointed—and on a single occasion we find this the case with a prophet[10]—yet this gives us no right to explain the title of Christ itself in a sense different from that which is indicated in Psalm ii. 6. The thirty-first answer of the Heidelberg Catechism thus stands in need of further elucidation, before it can—however true in its main contents—be accepted as the result of an accurate exegesis. To this must be added that, proceeding from this conception, one easily falls into the error of thinking of these three offices as following

[2] *Hist. Eccl.*, i. 3; *Dem. Ev.*, iv. 15.
[3] *Cat.*, x. 14; xi. 1.
[4] *De Civ. Dei.*, x. 6.
[5] *Inst.*, ii. 15.
[6] Compare Ans. 31 of the *Heid. Cat.*, and—in the Liturgical Writings—the thanksgiving after infant baptism.
[7] See his *Opuscula Theoll.*, i., p. 413.
[8] *Herv. Kerk.*, i., p. 394.
[9] Matt. xiii. 57; Luke xiii. 33.
[10] 1 Kings xix. 16.

each other in the order of time,—so that the Lord was first exclusively Prophet, then immediately after Priest, and finally King; while, on the contrary, from the evidence of the history, His prophetic life was at the same time already a priestly one, and His kingly dignity also shone forth amidst the deepest humiliation.[11] More of a like nature could be mentioned, in proof that here also the precious treasure is contained in "earthen vessels."

4. Yet there is much more to be adduced in favour of, than against, a conception, with regard to which we cannot be surprised that it has often been advocated with warmth. For it is, rightly regarded, the faithful expression of the most exalted reality. Christ *is* indeed the highest Prophet, the one High Priest, the everlasting King of the Church, because He is no less than the perfect and glorified God-man. Precisely in consequence of this exaltedness of His person, is He also perfectly and unchangeably in His work that which the highest bearers of these offices under the Old Covenant were only imperfectly and temporarily. Apart from the original signification of the name of Christ, it is certain that ages before His appearing the ideal of a perfect Prophet, a spotless High Priest, an everlasting King, was sketched in the Old Testament. There were no other dignities in Israel which could be named as at all approaching to these. An actual union of two of them in one person was reckoned unlawful,[12] and was looked forward to only as the ideal of a later future.[13] Philo[14] presents the dignity of Israel's lawgiver under that threefold point of view; and Josephus[15] in an adulatory tone commends John Hyrcanus as the one in whom a prophetic, priestly, and kingly character was seen. Thus the highest aspirations of the Old Covenant are blended in these three appellations; and in transferring them to the Christ of the Scriptures, faith confesses, in other words, that in Him the ideal of the Old Covenant is perfectly realised.

Precisely these three names, moreover, represent to us the full extent of the work of redemption, without its being possible for one of them to be either wanting, or transplaced, or replaced by another. He who will acknowledge only one or two of these Offices, to the exclusion of the third, fails to do justice to the fulness of the Gospel, and becomes one-sided, if he does not altogether lose the track. Lay stress on the Prophetic office, at the expense of the other two, and you become a Rationalist; on the High-priestly alone, and you become a Mystic; on the Kingly, overlooking the other two, and you split on the rock of Chiliastic reveries. All three cohere, and indeed in this order; since thus united they exhaust the subject, so far as it is possible to exhaust it. "Now where such a connectedness is seen, there arises a presumption that that which is so united will also be a complete whole—*dass das so Verbundene auch ein Vollständiges sein werde.*"[16] Hence it is, that even where this division is rejected, one is easily driven to have recourse to another in its place, in which only the names are changed. It corresponds in the main with the

[11] John xviii. 37.
[12] 2 Chron. xxvi. 18.
[13] Ps. cx. 4; Zech. vi. 11—13.
[14] *De Vita Mosis.*
[15] *De Bello Jud.*, i. cap. 2.
[16] Schleiermacher.

Apostolic saying, that Christ Jesus was made to us wisdom from God—prophetic office; righteousness—priestly office; sanctification—kingly office; and in this way, redemption.[17] In the doxology also of the Apocalypse, chap. i. 5, we meet with a similar combination of ideas. At the same time it causes us involuntarily to think of the threefold activity of the psychical life of man, in understanding, feeling, and will; and has to this extent the tendency anthropologically to point to Christ as the Redeemer of the whole man, with *all* his necessities. Finally, it places before us in an unconstrained and unequivocal manner, alike the full glory of the Mediator between God and men, and the higher unity between Christ and the Christian.[18]

5. The not unnatural question, to which of these three offices the highest value must be attached, is something like that, whether among the benefits of the sun, light, warmth, or fertility deserves the preference. Every exaltation of the one above the other may easily lead to ungrateful onesidedness. Yet we are certainly speaking in the spirit of the Gospel, when we claim the relative precedence of the High-priestly over the Prophetic and Kingly office; since in the first-named lies the focus and centre of the Lord's redeeming activity. "He is the *Mediator* of the New Covenant by His testimony, by His Propitiatory Sacrifice, and by the founding of a kingdom, of which He is Lord and Head."[19] The Prophetic office directs us and leads us up to the High-priestly one, as this again to the Kingly, which in its turn is the continuance in a modified form of the High-priestly activity.[20] It is thus not unnatural that in the whole of Soteriology the doctrine of propitiation attracts the greatest attention; for this reason, among others, that the most important question is also the most difficult. But, at the same time, it is necessary that, after the treatment of each of these offices separately, the higher unity of the three should be as far as possible made clear.

Compare the Article of EBRARD, *Jesu Christi dreifaches Amt.*, in Herzog, *R. E.*, p. 614, *sqq.*; LANGE, *l. l.*, § 74; NITZSCH, *l. l.*, § 132; LUTHARDT, *l. l.*, § 54; our discourse on the *Heid. Cat.*—Twelfth Sunday; A. KRAUSS, *Das Mittlerwerk, nach dem Schema des Munus Triplex*, in the *Jahrb. für deutsche Theol.* (1872), iv.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Further elucidation of the history of this article.—To what extent can a typico-symbolica character be ascribed to these three offices under the Old Covenant?—Can they be, as concerns Christ, sufficiently clearly distinguished the one from the other?—Criticism of some other divisions.—What is the sense of 1 Cor. i. 30?—To what extent can the Christian be partaker of the anointing of Christ? (1 John ii. 20, 27).

SECTION CIX.—THE PROPHETIC OFFICE.

We call Christ our highest Prophet, because in and through Him, the Incarnate Word, is given a revelation of the counsel and will of

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[17] 1 Cor. i. 30.
[18] *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. [illegible]
[19] Martensen.
[20] Heb. vii. 25; ix. 24

God for the salvation of sinners, which infinitely surpasses all previous revelations; and which during the present dispensation shall not be succeeded by any other and more perfect one. Christ Jesus is thus of God made to us *Wisdom*.

1. In speaking first of all of the Prophetic office of the Lord as an essential element in His redeeming activity, we take our stand entirely on Scriptural ground. The Lord not only speaks of Himself as a Prophet,[1] but also receives this name from others without contradiction,[2] and declares that He is come into the world in order to bear witness to the truth.[3] His disciples also hail Him by the name of Prophet and Apostle.[4] John, especially, describes Him as the One who has made known the till then hidden nature of God,[5] and renders adoring homage to Him as the Faithful Witness.[6] Yea, the voice from heaven, "Hear Him,"[7] proclaims aloud that in this His character He is raised far above Moses and Elias. However one-sided the preference with which this Prophetic office has been extolled —frequently at the expense of the High-priestly and Kingly office—in earlier times by the Socinians, and later by Rationalism and Modern Naturalism, yet just as little must it be overlooked that Jesus, though much more than a prophet, was also truly a Prophet. This He must be, not only because He was promised and expected as such,[8] but also because from the nature of the case the revelation of the truth must first take place, before we can speak of the expiation of sin or the founding of the Kingdom of God. Of what avail is it that the way is opened up, if it is not first of all pointed out?

2. When we speak of the Prophetic office of Jesus, our eye turns, as was to be expected, definitely to His public life as a Teacher, begun at His baptism by John, and concluded shortly before His death. Although the activity of the Spirit of the Lord before His incarnation,[9] and after His exaltation,[10] may to some extent be classed under this head—inasmuch as it was He Himself who spake by Prophet and Apostle—we can here only think of His Prophetic activity in the first-named sense, because the word of Prophet and Apostle rightly regarded was only the preparation for, and interpretation of, His own. Of this last we can say with the Reformer: "*Huc tendit prophetica dignitas in Christo, ut sciamus, in summâ doctrinæ quam tradit inclusos esse omnes perfectæ sapientiæ numeros.*"[11] But it must not be overlooked that not simply the word, but also the whole personality

[1] Matt. xiii. 57; Luke xiii. 33.
[2] Matt. xxi. 11; John iii. 2; iv. 19; vi. 14; ix. 17.
[3] John xviii. 37.
[4] Luke xxiv. 19; Acts iii. 22—24; Heb. i. 1; iii. 1.
[5] John i. 18.
[6] Rev. i. 5.
[7] Matt. xvii. 5b.
[8] Deut. xviii. 15; John vi. 14.
[9] 1 Pet. i. 11; comp. John i. 4.
[10] John xvi. 7—15.
[11] "The prophetic dignity in Christ tends to this end, that we may know that all the parts of perfect wisdom are included in the sum of doctrine which He delivers."—CALVIN.

of the Lord, is the expression of His prophetic dignity;[12] so that this last also, not less than His word, may be spoken of as a revelation of the truth in the sphere of morals and religion. While prepared to maintain in this sense His claim to the name of the highest of the prophets, we in doing so tacitly presuppose that which has been earlier said (§§ xxviii. and xxxii.) on Revelation in general and Prophetism in particular.

3. Christ may well receive this appellation, in the first place, because the revelation of God in Him has a higher *origin* than any other revelation. He also who sees in Christ nothing more than man, cannot possibly deny His superiority over even the most distinguished of those divinely commissioned under the Old Covenant. For in Him we find the most excellent qualities of the old Prophets united, without the accompaniment of a single weakness. Yet the Lord rises even higher, when—according to His own word—we place Him, as the Son, over against the servants,[13] and, with the greatest of all Prophets,[14] believe in His heavenly descent. He proclaims that which He has seen and heard with the Father—not only in the state of pre-existence, but also during His life on earth,—in unbroken communion with God[15]—and consequently speaks entirely according to the mind of the Father, nay, as it were, from the heart of the Father. However mechanical and unintelligent was the old Socinian conception of a constant ascending and descending of the Lord—*raptus in cœlum*—just as little can it be denied that the ground of His testimony was nothing less than His own intuition of Divine things, in contradistinction from that which by revelation was brought within the sphere of the prophet's ken. He does not simply receive light from time to time, but is Himself light; because He is the incarnate Logos, whose whole personality, not less than His word, manifests a revealing character.

4. Then also the *subject-matter* of that which this Prophet makes known to us, is fuller than that of any other prophetic testimony. Both Law and Gospel are here presented to us in a lustre before unknown. The former He fulfils,[16] the latter He reveals, from the time of His first arising;[17] and His prophecy may to such an extent be regarded as the crown of the old, as it is the germ and kernel of the new, which is taught by the Holy Spirit. That which is properly new in the prophetic word of the Lord is not to be sought for in the domain of Morals, not even in that of Theology, but definitely in that of Soteriology,—in the manifestation of God's forgiving and redeeming love for sinners, and of the one Way of Salvation through faith in the Son.[18] While other prophets proclaim God's will, He reveals in Himself God's nature, unveils God's eternal purpose of salvation, and directs to His own person as the only way to the Father. Thus His testimony displays throughout a Christo-centric character, and sheds its light upon all that—but also upon that alone—which on This side and Yonside belongs to the domain of religious-moral truth — ἀλήθεια. Upon disputed questions lying beyond this sphere, He refuses to give an answer,[19] but on all that lies within it, we see afforded us by Him a

[12] John xiv. 9.
[13] Matt. xxi. 38—42.
[14] John iii. 31.
[15] John iii. 13; vi. 62.
[16] Matt. v. 17.
[17] Luke iv. 18, 19.
[18] John iii. 16.
[19] Luke xii. 13, 14.

revelation, no doubt by no means complete, but nevertheless sufficient; and at the same time a surprising light shed, as on the past and the present, so also on the future,—more particularly the future of the Kingdom of God upon earth. In His Apocalyptic discourses (Matt. xxiv. and xxv.), the marvellous flower of His prophetic testimony opens, as it were, in its full glory, and a view of the world finds its basis in His word, in the highest sense of the word wholly *new*, and infinitely above the old rationalistic view, which remains old even in a modern form. Yea, He Himself in His whole personality is a palpable prophecy of what redeemed humanity shall through Him one day be and become;[20] and now already it is apparent that in this revealed mystery lie hidden *all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

5. No revelation, moreover, had a nobler *form* than that which we owe to this Prophetic office. Its character is not Israelitish-theocratic, but universal-human in the highest sense of the term. God here speaks, not in the tempest, earthquake, and fire, but as in the gentle murmur of the deep calm; and what charms us most, after the truth, is the *grace* poured forth upon the lips of the fairest among the children of men.[21] Infinitely above the revelation in dream, vision, or angelic appearance stands that which is contemplated in the highest form which we can conceive of, in an unsullied human personality, God's incarnate image. Granted that, when Jesus is speaking, a wise accommodation to the capacity and necessities of His first hearers may frequently appear, yet this very adaptation of His discourse serves only to bring home His word more closely to them, to grave it more deeply in their minds; and it is in the noblest sense popular, without ever becoming vulgar; and into whatever language translated, the Gospel of His Kingdom sounds equally sweet, because it addresses itself not exclusively to Jew or Greek, but to the Man in the one and the other.

6. A prophetic activity of an origin, subject-matter, and form like this, is naturally invested with a higher *authority* than can be ascribed to any other. Very impressive is His "but *I* say unto you," in comparison with the words of even the most eminent doctors of the law, and with good reason does it call forth the admiration of the multitude, that He speaks as one having authority.[22] Certainly He addresses Himself unceasingly to the sound understanding, the natural feeling, the witnessing conscience of His hearers; and He does not think of mechanically imposing the truth upon them, without their themselves comprehending what they were receiving and upon what grounds. It is nothing else than a moral authority which He exerts, the authority of the truth itself, which is seen and heard in Him and from Him, and which naturally awakens a response in every heart longing for salvation.[23] But precisely because this truth was not known before, and also after its revelation was to a certain extent unfathomable, it arose from the nature of the case that many a word of the Lord could find acceptance either not at all, or only on the ground of unbounded confidence in His person.[24] The prophetic authority of Jesus consists in the absolute right He has to claim that His word should be

[20] 2 Pet. i. 4.
[21] Luke iv. 22; John vii. 46.
[22] Matt. vii. 29.
[23] John vii. 17.
[24] See, for instance, John viii. 51, 56, 58.

believed and obeyed, even when the truth or wisdom of that word is as yet not at all or but imperfectly understood; believed and obeyed, because it is He who has uttered it. That with such a belief the right of our own reflection is by no means denied or checked, but rather called forth and legitimated, is at once self-apparent; and it is difficult to comprehend wherefore that which redounded to the credit of the thoughtful disciple of Pythagoras, should be beneath the dignity of the disciples of Jesus. He who renders to Him the homage due to His high dignity, can on that account, without further warrant, rest satisfied with the αὐτὸς ἔφα of the Master, in every case where wholly to comprehend or verify is for the present impossible; and so much the less does he incur the charge of precipitancy in doing so, where the authority of this Prophet "mighty in deed and word" is vouched for and confirmed by credentials which we are just as little at liberty to tear asunder as to leave unread. If also, according to His own utterance, faith in His word stands higher than that on the ground of the signs He wrought,[25] yet these also constantly testify that the Father hath sent Him; even as the Scriptures of the Prophets—with Moses at their head and John at the end—bore witness to Him.[26] But in connection with all these voices, we must by no means overlook the proofs afforded for His high prophetic authority, on the one hand by His life, on the other hand by His death, and then again by His Resurrection and Ascension. His life was in all respects the interpretation and confirmation of His word and precept.[27] Dying, He rendered testimony to the truth,[28] so that He, the Mediator and King, may in a certain sense also be termed the first *Martyr* (μάρτυς) of the Kingdom of Heaven. In His resurrection, finally, triumphs not only His person, but also His word, and there begins a continued confirmation and glorification of His testimony in the course of history, which manifestly shows that God has for ever made His own the cause of this His highest Ambassador. (Compare §§ xxxii. and xxxiv.) On all these grounds Christian Dogmatics cannot hesitate here to speak of an authority which rightly regarded may be termed "an end of all controversy."[29] Here is the "*Doctor doctorum, cujus schola in terrâ et cathedra in cœlo est.*"[30]

7. It is even so. For no revelation has, in addition to these other characteristics, a more general *object* in view than that which is given in His person and word. He felt, called, and showed Himself to be the Light of the world.[31] While the old revelation of God to Israel was designed for a single nation, the Gospel of the Kingdom is designed for all peoples.[32] Single utterances in the particularistic sense[33] were only of temporary application; the commission, on the other hand, issued before His departure,[34] continues of ever-abiding force. It is remarkable that the only Prophet in Israel, with whom the Lord compares Himself, is precisely Jonah, the prophet of the Gentile world.[35] The falling away of the wall of separation

[25] John xiv. 11.
[26] John v. 33—36, 46.
[27] Matt. xi. 29.
[28] Matt. xxvi. 63, 64; 1 Tim. vi. 13; Rev. i. 5.
[29] Heb. vi. 16.
[30] Augustine.
[31] John viii. 12.
[32] Matt. xxiv. 14.
[33] Matt. x. 5; xv. 24.
[34] Luke xxiv. 47.
[35] Matt. xii. 41.

between Israel and the nations was not simply the inevitable consequence, but the definite aim of His word, an aim contemplated and—attained by Him.[36]

8. What prophetic activity had, besides, a more beneficent *power* than His? "The systems of all philosophers together have not even been able to reform the street in which they lived; but His word has transformed the world." What an influence on the personal and domestic, the religious and moral, the social and political life, and in the domain of arts and science has it exerted, and is still exerting, notwithstanding the most violent opposition!—Thus, finally, is also the value and *enduring character* of His prophetic work more lasting than that of even the most illustrious interpreters of truth.[37] While all the prophets point to Him, He points to no one but Himself and the Father; and even the Holy Spirit, whom He promises and sends, continues simply to take of that which is His.[38] Every effort to rise essentially above Him in this domain—as is proved by Montanism, Islamism, and Infallibilism—is condemned to a constant series of failures, and to a total discomfiture in the end; every form of wisdom which opposes itself to Him is sooner or later smitten with utter blindness. No single reason moreover exists for looking for a higher revelation than is given us in and through Him (§ xxxiii. 6); from a truly Christian standpoint it cannot even be conceived of or desired; on the contrary, the first word with which the first work on Christian Dogmatics opened, retains its force undiminished: *Omnes, qui credunt et certi sunt, quod gratia et veritas per Jesum Christum facta sit, et Christum veritatem esse norunt, . . . Scientiam, quæ provocat homines ad bene beateque vivendum, non aliunde, quam* AB IPSIS VERBIS CHRISTI *suscipiunt*.[39]

9. Under the guidance of such a Prophet every believer, and the whole Church with him, is in the possession of a *wisdom* from God, which is something else than that which is called science in the strict sense of the term; but which, infinitely higher than all learning, may bear the name of the true wisdom of life and science of experience, and, in the domain of saving truth, puts him in a position infallibly to distinguish, as by a spiritual tact, between truth and lie.[40] Jesus' true disciples become in turn, and in their measure, witnesses and prophets of the truth, in whom the ideal of the Old Testament and the Master's own promise is ever more and more fulfilled,[41] and who partly have already experienced, partly yet look for in the future, the realisation of the saying: "The darkness is passing away, and the true light *now* shineth."[42]

Compare our *Christologie*, iii., pp. 427—438; *Jesus und Hillel, an historical comparison*, by F. DELITZSCH (1866); E. DE PRESSENSÉ, *Jésus Christ, His Times*, etc. [pp. 288—

[36] John x. 16; xii. 32.
[37] Matt. xxiv. 35.
[38] John xvi. 15.
[39] All who believe and are assured that grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and know Christ to be the truth . . . draw the science, which teaches men to live well and happily, from no other source than from *the very words of Christ* Himself.—ORIGEN.
[40] John x. 4, 5; 1 John ii. 20, 27.
[41] John vi. 45; 1 Pet. ii. 9b.
[42] 1 John ii. 8.

306 of Eng. trans.], and, by the same writer, the article *L'Autorité en matière religieuse*, in the *Revue Chrét.* of 1871.

Points for Inquiry.

What has Jesus in common with all true prophets? and wherein does He excel the most illustrious of them?—In what relation does He place Himself to the law and the prophets of the O. T.?—Can it be historically proved that the Lord was also above the most distinguished doctors of the law of His own and succeeding days?—Did He remain a prophet even after His death? (1 Pet. iii. 19.)—In what relation does His word stand to that of the Apostles? (Matt. x. 40.)—To what extent, and with what title, does He demand belief upon the authority of His word?—What is the sense and intention of Rev. xix. 10b?—Extent, ground, and value of the Christian γνῶσις.—The prophetic office of Christ, and the gift of prophecy in the Church.—On what account was the first-named of these indispensable for our salvation, and yet insufficient for it?

SECTION CX.—THE HIGH-PRIESTLY OFFICE.

We call Christ our only High Priest, because He alone has satisfied the deepest wants of humanity, and restored the broken communion between man and the holy God, by presenting the perfect offering of atonement for the sins of the whole world. This High-Priestly function Christ has discharged partly during His sojourn upon earth, and partly is continuing during His life in the heavenly glory. By the one as well as by the other is Jesus Christ of God made to us *Righteousness.*

1. The *connection* between the Prophetic and the High-priestly activity of the Redeemer is not difficult to show, as moreover the transition from the one part of His life's task to the other is more or less expressly indicated in the Gospels.[1] As Prophet of the New Covenant, the Lord made repeated reference to that which He should accomplish as High Priest; and, on the other hand, as High Priest He procures that salvation which as Prophet He could only proclaim. From the nature of the case it follows that the one must lead to the other, on which account we see already, in the prophetic description devoted to the Servant of the Lord,[2] the conception of the Great Teacher of the nations insensibly glide over into that of the Sin-bearer. In making mention of Christ as the High Priest of the New Dispensation, we mean that He and no one else is the mediate cause of the reconciliation of the world with God.

2. That the Scriptures of the New Testament afford sufficient *ground* for such a conception, cannot be gainsaid. The Epistle to the Hebrews especially has the particular design of presenting the Lord and His work

[1] Matt. xxvi. 1; John xiii. 1.

[2] Isa. l. 4, *sqq.*

in that exalted light. He is here the realisation of that which was already shadowed forth under the Old Dispensation, the perfect High Priest, who presents Himself a Sacrifice to God, but not for His own sins. In the Pauline Epistles, it is true, the idea of sacrifice is brought more into the foreground; but ever in such wise that He who presents the sacrifice is, at the same time, conceived of also as Priest, even though the word is not used, as for example, Ephes. v. 2. The same idea also underlies, although indirectly, the Petrine conception, that Christ has once suffered, "that He might bring us to God;"[3] and the Johannine, "manifested to take away our sins."[4] How clearly also does the priestly consciousness express itself in the words of the departing Saviour Himself: "For their sakes I sanctify Myself."[5] It is evident that there is here something more than an antiquated accommodation to Jewish notions and circumstances; just as we meet, indeed, among all nations of antiquity in which the sense of sin was awakened, also with priests and sacrifices. No wonder that, in harmony with the teaching of the Old and the New Testament, we find this redeeming design of the Lord's suffering and death clearly and unequivocally expressed in the Symbolical Writings of the Christian Church. Already the *Symbolum Nicænum* speaks of this as having taken place, ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, and the *Pseudo-Athanasianum* as *pro salute nostrâ*.[6] Here also the task of Dogmatics is not to *prove* the subject, as though it were something doubtful, but as far as possible to *explain* it, and to recommend a presentation of this mystery of Godliness, which—as being in harmony with Scripture and Experience—justifies itself before the tribunal of Christian thought. We believe we shall best acquit ourselves of this task if, in a series of propositions, we proceed from the general and clear to the particular and intricate.

3. *Reconciliation with God is the first need of humanity.* Scarcely does this axiomatic statement require more than simple utterance, at once to ensure assent. For man was created for communion with God, and this communion has been broken by sin. Because, however, the man is not lost in the sinner, there has been produced, on this account, the deepest disharmony (§ lxxx.), and peace is impossible so long as this condition continues to exist. Separated from God, the man is far removed from the enjoyment of that which is best, and the sinner has to fear the worst; only then is all made good again, when man—restored to his right relation towards God—is assured of God's favour and friendship. Unquestionably the man and the sinner has yet other needs than that of forgiveness alone; need of light and power, of renewal and sanctification, of consolation and hope, but of all this we can speak only after the gulf has ceased to exist which separates him from his Creator. For this reason, the Gospel begins with this proclamation, and can be reduced to this again, as in a brief epitome.[7] In the deepest depths of every sinful heart slumbers

[3] 1 Pet. iii. 18.
[4] 1 John iii. 5.
[5] John xvii. 19.
[6] See further, *Neth. Conf.*, Artt. xx., xxi., xxiii.; *Heid Cat.*, Ans. 37—40, 43, 56; *Can. Dordr.* ii. 1—4, 7, 8.
[7] Acts xiii. 38, 39; 2 Cor. v. 18; 1 John ii. 12.

at least the first note of the cry, "God be *gracious* to me a sinner!" Nevertheless,

4. *The reconciliation of the sinner with God* (καταλλαγή) *is inconceivable without an atonement for sins in the sight of God* (ἱλασμός). *True reconciliation can only be the fruit of expiation.* If we have hitherto spoken of reconciliation in general terms, its nature and necessity must now be more exactly explained, and to this end it is necessary carefully to distinguish between the two Greek words which in Dutch are rendered by the same term, "*verzoening*."[8] By the first of these is indicated the destroying of the enmity; by the other, the removal of the guilt contracted by sins. The καταλλαγή presupposes separation, the ἱλασμός in addition to this presupposes also guilt, and the former can come to an end only after the latter has been expiated. The ἱλασμός thus stands related to the καταλλαγή, as the cause to the effect, as the means to the end; and we find both referred to in their natural connection, amongst others, by Paul in 2 Cor. v. 20, 21, although here also he does not use the *word* ἱλασμός. That without such means of atoning for its sins, there could be no thought of a reconciliation between the sinful world and the holy God, is the natural consequence of this holiness itself, of which the awakened conscience powerfully testifies. The assertion that repentance in itself alone is sufficient for ever to blot out the misdeed from before God's face can be repeated only by those who do not yet know the terrible seriousness of sin and the anguish of the conscience. "C'est l'instinct moral de l'homme, que le repentir ne suffit pas pour réparer la faute, et qu'elle doit être expiée. Pour réparer, il faut souffrir."[9] Undoubtedly it was this "instinct," from which has arisen from the earliest ages the felt want of atoning sacrifices and the mediation of human priests; and by Himself instituting the sacrificial ritual in Israel, and prescribing everything in connection therewith which must take place for the expiation of sins, God has shown that this want was something more than self-deception, that it was the expression of a deeply affecting truth. The propitiatory sacrifice, as well the sin-offering (חַטָּאת) as the trespass-offering (אָשָׁם), was appointed to atone for particular acts of transgression, and the blood of the victim was looked upon as covering (כִּפֶּר) the guilt of the offerer before the eye of God, and as being drawn as a veil between man and his Creator. The transgressor had previously, by the laying on of his hands, symbolically transferred to the victim the guilt from which he sought deliverance, and thereby *ipso facto* expressed his own worthiness of death. Then the victim was slain by the offerer himself, and thus vicariously for his soul received in death the penalty of sin. For in the blood the clean animal—and there can here be no thought of any other—gave up its innocent life to God as a propitiatory sacrifice; and the sacrificial blood, sprinkled upon the altar, was accepted by God as an equivalent for the soul of the offerer.[10] The blood was regarded as setting him free from sin,[11] *i.e.*, not simply as morally purifying, but first of all as de-

[8] Rom. v. 11; 1 John ii. 2a. [The author has the former reference to 2 Cor. v. 18, where also the same ambiguity exists in the Dutch version, though not in the Eng.]

[9] Guizot.

[10] Lev. xvii. 11.

[11] [Ontzondigen, καθαρίζειν, חִטֵּא.]

livering from guilt and chastisement. Without such shedding of blood no remission of sins could take place;[12] only after the sanctity of the law had received its full demand, could there be a question of the full enjoyment of Divine compassion. And this could now be experienced, for the offerer had now not only in a symbolical manner devoted his life to God, and given up his sinful *I* to death, but as it were, in the victim which represented him, made expiation for his own sins; while the putting away of guilt thus (objectively) accomplished, was personally applied to him (subjectively) by means of the sprinkling of the blood. Thus was he restored to the communion of God, without the claim of the law being infringed, and this not by the way of renouncing his sins alone, but by way of expiation, by substitution; by a propitiation, therefore, not only required, but also graciously accepted of God. In truth, "it is high time at length to cease proclaiming that, which for century after century was regarded as the highest and most important which the ages knew, to be an absolutely vulgar invention of the rudest Superstition and Fetichism, and above all, to cease giving ourselves airs, as though the great question were now rationally and sufficiently explained."[13]

He who, with us, recognises in the institution of the sacrificial ritual a Divine act, a manifestation of holiness, wisdom, and love, has already at the same time discovered the difference between Israel and the Gentile world in this important respect. Even in the last-mentioned domain we meet now and then with an almost despairing effort by methods of man's own to fill up the gulf of sin, and to appease the wrath of the gods by sacrifices of men or beasts. Here, on the other hand, is an atonement, not proceeding from man, but from the highest Majesty and compassion itself; not in order that He might be moved to pity, but on the contrary, because out of pity He wills not the death of the sinner. God does not here become reconciled, but He Himself reconciles the world by providing an atonement for sin, and in this way also reconciles the sinner to Himself, and restores to him inward peace. Nevertheless this expiation remains a purely symbolical one; for in reality it is impossible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin;[14] the sacrifice is graciously accepted, but without its being able really to form a counterbalance against the sins of a single individual, much less of a sinful nation. Thus the pacification it affords can from the nature of the case be only temporary and relative; the consciousness of sin still remains;[15] a true, perfect atonement is necessary, of which that which is typico-symbolical is at best but a prophecy and shadow. Can this ever be brought about? Thus much is certain for the reflecting mind:—

5. *Only from God can proceed a true atonement, in the twofold sense of the word, with all that is necessary thereto.* In Holy Scripture, also, this conviction is repeatedly expressed,[16] and it cannot prove difficult to confirm its claim to infallible accuracy. Suppose even the most precious sacrifice was presented wholly voluntarily by sinful humanity, what character would it present but that of worship according to one's own will,[17] so long as it was

[12] Heb. ix. 22.
[13] Bähr.
[14] Heb. x. 4.
[15] Heb. x. 2.
[16] Ps. xlix. 7, 8; Micah vi. 6; Matt. xvi. 26.
[17] Col. ii. 23.

not manifest that God desired, and would graciously accept precisely *this* sacrifice? If there has been a transgressing of the law of God, which is the expression of His adorable Nature, it depends absolutely only upon Him whether and in what way He will see the forfeited peace restored. On the side of man this restoration is the less possible, because the sinner, under the influence of the awakened conscience, is disposed indeed to cast off the burden of guilt from himself, or, were it possible, to flee from the presence of his Creator, but not of his own impulse to return to Him. Conversion without love is impossible, but how shall love arise in a heart which is filled with enmity and fear? Only there can it be born, where the firm assurance of God's forgiving love has been produced; but precisely this is what the sinner is least able to give himself, or any fellow-sinner to give him. Either the atonement is for ever impossible, or it is to be looked for only from God Himself.

6. *God Himself*, however, *can bring about this atonement in no other way than one in perfect harmony with the Majesty of His character.* This is almost self-evident, and yet there is need that we should be reminded of it; because men so commonly think and speak as though God could in any way equally well restore the sinner to His favour and friendship. In opposition to such a notion the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews has already[18] referred to the character of meetness and God-worthiness—a Divine *decebat*—which a plan of redemption proceeding from God must bear. God can do all that He will, but cannot possibly deny Himself, *i.e.*, His own spotlessly holy nature; He can satisfy His every demand, but cannot possibly be satisfied with anything less than His righteous requirement. Man can sin at his pleasure, but God cannot at pleasure forgive sin, least of all in a way which would place Him in an unjust or unworthy light before the eye of the creature. However little also we are inclined to an abstract *à-priorism*, we may yet confidently expect, (where for a moment we leave out of sight the facts,) that an atonement instituted and effected by God, can never be to the obscuring of one of His attributes; but only the bright revelation of the same spotless and indivisible majesty, which already shines forth so gloriously in the works of Creation and Providence.

7. But to what end, even for a single moment, do we speak hypothetically, where precisely the assertory tone is never more in place than here? *God has in reality accomplished this atonement, by the intervention of His once abased and now exalted Son.* In every kind of way the Gospel gives testimony to this truth, and its whole essence is concentrated in the cross of propitiation.[19] According to its constant teaching, it is God from whom the atonement has proceeded, but ever God revealed and glorified in Christ. He who, as do some, looks up more confidingly to the Son than to the Holy Father, manifests precisely thereby that his conception of the doctrine of the atonement is no purely Evangelical one. The Christian conscience does not find *repose* alone in God, it glories in Him as the source and primary cause of the reconciliation.[20] He Himself first, moved by nothing but Himself, had compassion on the world, and gave up His Son, who, on the one hand, on earth accomplished that which as the

[18] Heb. ii. 10. [19] 1 Cor. i. 17; ii. 2. [20] Rom. v. 11.

eternal High Priest He had to do, "to make atonement (εἰς τὸ ἱλάσκεσθαι) for the sins of the people" (*Satisfactio*);[21] and, on the other hand, continues in heaven His mediatorial work (*Intercessio*). In consequence thereof His Church has now peace—as contradistinguished from the disharmony of Heathendom and the looking for salvation on the part of Israel—and may rest in the offered sacrifice of propitiation, while she herself henceforth presents no other offerings than those of praise and thanksgiving. For the Christian Gnosis the way of atonement is no longer a problem to which the key has to be found, but a fact which is to be thankfully accepted, and so far as possible adoringly sounded.

8. In connection therewith, however, one matter must not be overlooked. *The true nature of this atonement we can learn only from the Gospel of the Old Testament and the New, viewed in the light of conscience, and of the Christian life-experience.* On its own authority human reason is just as little qualified as in a position to decide anything in this matter. Just as little is it here the first question, what is taught by Church or community, since this also has value only in so far as it is the pure expression of the true testimony of God concerning the Way of Salvation. This testimony sounds forth to us distinctly in the Gospel of the Scriptures, and what the Christian consciousness declares can only be the echo and sealing thereof. The word of Scripture can be understood and the inner response thereto comprehended, only after the Judge has proclaimed the holiness of God's law and the greatness of our guilt to other than deaf ears. So long as the reproach of Anselm is merited, "*tu non satis cogitasti, quanti ponderis sit peccatum*," the sanctuary of the atonement remains to us inaccessible, or at least veiled in gloom.

Compare J. I. Doedes, *De verzoening der zonde volgens het O. en N. T.*, in the *Jaarb. v. W. Th.* (1846); Oehler's important article, *Opfercultus des A. T.*, in Herzog's *R. E.*, x.; Kurtz, *Das mosaïsche Opfer* [Eng. trans.]; J. H. Gunning, Jun., *Christus de gekruisigde voor ons en in ons* (1864); Wangemann, *Das Opfer nach der H. Schrift A. u. N. T.* (1866); E. Barger, *Christologie van den Brief aan de Hebreën*, p. 93, *sqq.* (1871); and further, the literature in §§ civ., cxi., cxii.

Points for Inquiry.

Whence is it that the Lord Himself has spoken so comparatively little of His High-Priestly office?—Further elucidation of the most important and disputed points in the sacrificial ritual of the O. T.—Comparison of the expiatory sacrifices among the Greeks and Romans with those in Israel.—What is taught in Heb. vii. 22—28? and to what extent was this truth understood even under the old dispensation?—Whence so much prejudice and misunderstanding as still exists with regard to the doctrine of the atonement?

SECTION CXI.—CONTINUATION.

On earth Christ offered the sacrifice of atonement, according to the counsel of God, by the perfect obedience with which, during

[21] Heb. ii. 17.

His whole life, but especially in His sufferings and death, He wholly voluntarily fulfilled the law, and bare God's holy wrath against the sins of the world. By that spotless sacrifice the requirement of the highest Majesty has received full satisfaction; and in consequence thereof, for all who believe in Christ, the guilt of sin is in such wise covered, that at the same time its power and dominion is in principle destroyed. There exists thus a direct connection between our redemption from sins and the bloody sacrifice of the Cross; and this connection is of such nature that the glory of all God's perfections is revealed therein in a lustre before unknown.

1. When now, after the previous more general considerations, we proceed to the contemplation of the High-priestly activity of the Redeemer *upon earth*, we simply continue the series of our propositions. Thus much may now at least be considered as established with absolute certainty: *according to the eternal counsel of God, Jesus Christ must suffer and die, not merely by means of, but for, the sins of the world.* That which we have already called attention to in an earlier place (§ ciii. 6), that the Son of Man *must needs* go, as it was determined in the counsel of the Father (κατὰ τὸ ὡρισμένον), must here serve as the starting-point for all further investigation. Therewith is already rejected in principle the superficial view that Jesus only fell a victim to the sins of men, in consequence of their blindness and wickedness. Unquestionably this *also* was the case, but yet not this principally, far less exclusively. The word of the Apostles, on the contrary, in harmony with His own, gives us even in its most general forms, the right to make the assertion that He underwent death *because of* our transgressions (διά), *on their account* (περί), *for* sins (ὑπέρ);[1] and thus, unless we had been sinners, the Christ need not die. On account of sins, *i.e.*, in order that they might be taken away, was that death not only relatively, but imperatively, necessary; it bears the character of an atoning sacrifice, not merely of a martyrdom. The Lord with death in view, unquestionably bore testimony to the truth,[2] and, at the same time, left us the highest example of obedience and patience;[3] but so little is the one and the other here the main thing, that the Gospel but seldom, and as it were only in passing, makes mention thereof. Nowhere does it teach that the object of His death was either to confirm His doctrine or to afford an example. To something of infinitely greater importance does the word of the Apostles point us, even when uttered without this design; Paul, for instance, when asking whether then *he* also was crucified for the Church.[4] That greater meaning, however, presents itself in its true light before our eye only when we contemplate this death of the cross, not apart from, but in the closest connection with, the whole preceding life and suffering.

2. *This suffering and death of Christ, not less than the whole of His preceding life, manifests the character of a sacrifice of the most perfect obedience.*

[1] Rom. iv. 25; 1 Cor. xv. 3; Gal. i. 4.
[2] 1 Tim. vi. 13.
[3] Phil. ii. 5–8; 1 Pet. ii. 21.
[4] 1 Cor. i. 13a.

That, in the sight of God, unreserved obedience was better than all sacrifices together, had been already repeatedly expressed in the Old Testament.[5] If thus a sacrifice was to be really pleasing to Him, and to afford an actual atonement for sins before His holy countenance, it could only be a moral and spiritual sacrifice, a sacrifice of obedience; *i.e.*, one of which not the material of the blood in itself, but the voluntary surrender of the life, of the soul unto death—of which the blood was the symbol and bearer—formed the kernel and essence. Such a sacrifice Christ now has presented, according to the uniform tenour of Scripture, confirmed by the total impression of His whole life; and the Epistle to the Hebrews even sets us the example of attaching the highest value to this moral side of the sacrificial act.[6] That sacrifice does not begin with His self-surrender to death, but already with His coming into the world.[7] He constantly offers prayers and supplications in the days of His flesh,[8] and the pouring forth of His soul unto death is nothing else than the completion of the edifice of obedience, raised constantly higher through sufferings. Nowhere does the Gospel draw a sharp line of distinction between active and passive obedience; and far less does it give a hint that the former stands in a different relation to the expiation of sins than the latter, or the converse. "On the contrary, His life is *one* continued *sacrifice*, one voluntary act of self-surrender, one silent suffering,—inasmuch as He, under the continued and increasing opposition of the world, will redeem men, heal them from their sin, as Redeemer take away this last, by Himself taking it upon His soul and bearing it; thus this His voluntary sacrifice and suffering is present in every moment of His earthly pilgrimage, and renews itself continually, even though under a different form."[9] His death also is no fate simply, but an act, accomplished only after He had come to a clear consciousness of the Father's will, and for this very reason beyond measure well-pleasing to the Father.[10]

3. *In presenting this sacrifice, the Lord has perfectly fulfilled the law, and throughout His whole life, but especially upon the cross, borne in His own body the wrath of God against the sins of the whole human race.* That Christ only by His active obedience fulfilled the law, only by His passive obedience bore the chastisement, is nowhere taught in the Gospel. The one cannot in a Soteriological aspect be separated from the other (§ cii. 4); together they display *one* character, and work for the accomplishment of *one* end. It is remarkable how the Evangelist sees, even in the healing of the sick by Jesus, a fulfilment of the prophetic word touching the redeeming sufferings of the Servant of the Lord;[11] apparently strange, and yet wholly according to truth. Voluntarily entering into the depth of distress and death of humanity, He bears this with intensest sympathy as High Priest, on His tenderly loving heart: He suffers His life long *with* humanity, in expectation that He shall die *for* the race. "In suffering *with* another, there begins also at the same time a suffering *for* the other, which in its true culminating point becomes a suffering *instead of* the other."[12] In a very real sense, therefore, the apparently harsh expression, that Christ has borne the wrath

[5] 1 Sam. xv. 22; Micah vi. 6—8.
[6] Heb. ix. 14.
[7] Heb. x. 5—9.
[8] Heb. v. 7—9.
[9] Martensen.
[10] John x. 17, 18; xiv. 31.
[11] Matt. viii. 16, 17.
[12] Lange.

of God against the sins, not of the elect alone, but of the whole human race,[13] may thus be defended, provided every anthropomorphistic conception is here as far as possible excluded. It is equivalent to saying that He lifelong, but especially at the end, by a pure act of His free will, bore the heavy burden of the consequences of sins, in the committing of which He personally had no part, and in the judgment of which God's holy displeasure is revealed upon the unrighteousness and wickedness of men.[14] This displeasure He had not to fear for Himself; and for His consciousness the experiencing of the same in His own person certainly had not the character of punishment, since in life and death He was beyond measure assured of the love of the Father.[15] But once voluntarily entered into the communion of our fallen race, He must now also—both in the subjective and objective sense of the term—bear that which He had in no degree merited. He so perfectly fulfils God's holy law in His act of suffering, that the Father Himself can demand no higher obedience. But He experiences at the same time, in His voluntary suffering and dying, the guilt and curse of the sins of the world so really, and in so terrible a manner, that He here especially manifests Himself to our view, according to the testimony of Prophets and Apostles, as the sacrificial Lamb who *bears* the sins of the world—in other words, endures their consequences[16]—in order for ever to *take* them *away*. He became, on the tree of the curse, as it were Sin personified, in order that the Righteousness and the Life, as it were concentrated in Him, might in this way become the portion of sinners. Nothing less than this is the sense of numerous passages of Scripture, which are more fully explained in the Bibl. Theol. of the New Testament.[17] "Quæcumque peccata ego, tu, et nos fecimus, tam propria sunt Christo (crucifixo), quasi ipse fecisset."[18] As the sin offering symbolically and unconsciously bore the guilt of the offerer, so does the suffering and dying Jesus in reality and consciously bear the chastisement of our sins. That which presses on Him as He ascends the hill of Calvary, and draws forth from Him the most touching complaint,[19] is the fruit of the sins of men, and not of *these* men alone. Jews and Gentiles who co-operate in bringing about His death, are but the representatives of sinful humanity with its determinedly hostile principle, which, wherever the Light of the world had arisen, would nowhere have prepared for it a better reception;[20] and not simply the expression of a lowly self-deception, but of a sacred truth, is heard in the language of the penitential hymn:

> Nun was du, Herr, erduldet, ist alles meine Last;
> Ich hab' es selbst verschuldet, was du getragen hast.[21]

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[13] *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 37.
[14] Rom. i. 18.
[15] John viii. 29; xvi. 32.
[16] Compare Lam. v. 7.
[17] See, for example, Isa. liii. 4—6; John i. 29; 1 Pet. ii. 24; Gal. iii. 13; 2 Cor. v. 21.
[18] Luther.
[19] Matt. xxvii. 46.
[20] John iii. 19, 20.
[21] Paul Gerhardt, [in the hymn "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden," "O sacred Head once wounded."]

It is simply the prolonging of the note raised by the penitent Israel, and this alone gives its true significance to a continued contemplation of the cross.

4. Yet thoughtful faith cannot refrain from the question, how *one* obedient suffering and dying can effect such great things; and to this question also only the Gospel of the Scriptures affords the answer. *This one sacrifice has an expiatory force over against the disobedience of so many, because it was offered by the Son of God, who as the second Adam*, i.e., *the true man, voluntarily takes the place of the whole of humanity, and represents it before God.* It is impossible to comprehend the world-historic significance of the sacrifice of the Lord, so long as He is regarded only as a man among men, although above many, yea, even above all others. As *the* man, the second Man from heaven, the God-man, must He be regarded in accordance with Scripture, if we are to understand how the highest act of His love has not only an individual, but universal, yea, cosmical significance. On this account John, at the beginning of the history of the Lord's sufferings, lays such stress upon the peerless self-consciousness, with which the Saviour prepared to undergo His deepest humiliation;[22] and upon the fact that the blood, by which we are cleansed from all sin, is the blood of Jesus Christ, *God's Son*.[23] This Son of God is not simply a man, as others, but *the* man, as no one else; the Spiritual Head of a new humanity, which in Him as its representative appears before God justified and glorified. In order, however, to be able to represent restored humanity before the presence of God, He must first of all take the place of sinful humanity before God's righteous judgment. It is the constant teaching of the New Testament that He offers the sacrifice of obedience, not simply for the benefit of, but *in the place of*, sinners; so that these no longer need to die on account of their sins, since no other than Christ has placed Himself *in the stead* of transgressors. This does not actually lie in the grammatical significance of a word—ὑπέρ—but in the whole Symbolics of the Divinely appointed sacrificial ritual, and in the letter and spirit of that which has been proclaimed by the Lord and His Apostles concerning the aim and fruits of His sufferings.[24] That which He does is what every man ought to have done, consecrate himself perfectly to God; that which He bears is what every sinner must have borne, God's holy and terrible displeasure; but the obedience and love with which *He* does and suffers this for others—in other words, with which He presents Himself a faultless sacrifice to God—is of such inestimable value, that the Father accepts this sacrifice as though it were presented by sinful humanity, which henceforth, so far as it becomes a believing humanity, is comprehended, regarded, and as it were gathered up by God in and under this One person.[25] The dignity of the person of the Lord thus presents the key to the explaining of the force of His work. The perfect obedience of Christ is imputed to the sinner who believes as his own, in place of his own disobedience, which could and must have been imputed to him. The revealed mystery of the atonement for sin is thus no other than that of the innermost communion of life and love.

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[22] John xiii. 1—3.
[23] 1 John i. 7.
[24] Matt. xx. 28; John x. 11; Gal. iii. 13; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.
[25] Heb. ii. 11.

Willingly does He make all that was ours His own; willingly does the believer leave the communion with the old Adam, now to share in the righteousness, and, in consequence thereof, in the holiness and glory, of the second Adam. "Thou, Lord Jesus, art my righteousness, and I am Thy sin;"[26] but this righteousness is no robe which only externally covers the sinner without inwardly changing him, but a spiritual treasure, in which he inwardly participates according to the law of personal community of life. God regards him in Christ, and justifies him, *i.e.*, frees him from the guilt and chastisement of sin; not *because* He foresees that the sinner will now also be sanctified, but out of free grace, moved thereto by nothing but Himself,[27] and *in order that* the thus justified one may now also become a sanctified one in Christ.[28] The sacrifice of the God-man is for God the moral rehabilitation of humanity, and in the fruit of this rehabilitation the redeemed one personally shares, as the result of the *Unio mystica*.

5. *By such a sacrifice the requirement of the highest majesty has been perfectly satisfied.* He who reflects more deeply feels that the necessity for the sacrifice of the Lord is made sufficiently manifest, only when this has become apparent not only on the side of man, but also on the side of God. It is this conviction from which, as the metaphysical ground of the doctrine of propitiation, that of satisfaction has arisen; a word in many a prejudiced ear of anything but pleasing sound, but yet the best expression for the equally certain as important truth, that the sacrificial death of the Lord bears a character becoming God and worthy of God.[29] Wherefore should God have required and accepted this sacrifice, if without it He could have equally well forgiven sin, without in a single respect detracting from the authority of His holy law? He who perceives that the claim of the law is by no means something outside of, or in opposition to, God, but simply the expression of His will and nature, will not for a moment desire that grace should be manifested *at the expense* of righteousness; because he comprehends that were the claim of the law overlooked by the Lawgiver Himself, the foundations of the whole moral order of the world would be shaken and overthrown. But it must never be overlooked that God's nature is just as little Righteousness alone as Grace alone, but holy Love, Love towards Himself first of all as the most perfect being, but then also love towards all that exists beyond Him, but by means of Him (§ l.). Now this holy love imperatively demands the maintenance of the moral order, or that where it has been broken it should be restored; and that thus also the sentence—not arbitrarily, but on that very account also irrevocably—pronounced upon transgression, should not be simply set aside, but fulfilled in the transgressor, unless a means be discovered of conferring grace without infringement on the claim of right, which, once more, has its foundation in God Himself, and is identical with His own nature. The "*fiat justitia, pereat mundus*," is no mere authoritative utterance, but in the extreme case the expression of an absolute necessity. It is better that the world should perish than that the sacred right of its Creator should be obscured; and truly it would have perished, had not

[26] Luther.
[27] Matt. xviii. 27.
[28] Col. ii. 10.
[29] Heb. ii. 12.

God Himself provided that which surpassed the capacity of all creatures. The Supreme Majesty demands to be perfectly obeyed, and if not, that the sentence once pronounced should be executed against transgression. That the one and the other here really took place, follows not simply from what has been said, but we are expressly given to understand it by Paul, in Rom. iii. 25, 26; viii. 3, 4. If a manifestation of God's righteousness was necessary, on account of the passing over of former sins, which were apparently not imputed, such a *manifestation* might well be termed an empty *representation* if justice was not here actually administered.[30] But in the flesh of the Holy God-man was endured the judicial sentence against the sins of the humanity assumed by Him, and God can consequently perfectly absolve the greatest sinner, without on that account ceasing to be holy and righteous. We have here to do not alone with satisfaction to a righteousness demanding the enforcement of punishment, but with satisfaction to the requirement of the one absolute perfection, *i.e.*, the holy Love, which, however, cannot possibly render less glorious its own light, in order to kindle a light in our darkness. We need not therefore go so far as to say that Christ was *punished* in our stead, since it is not the punishment in itself which makes amends for sin, but the sacrifice of perfect obedience which does this, where it—if so it must be—subjects itself *also* to the punishment. "If I bear the chastisement of another instead of him, the same suffering which *for him* would have had the moral quality of a punishment, has not for me, who am innocent, the moral quality of a punishment. For the notion of punishment contains, besides the objective element of the suffering inflicted by the judge, also the subjective element of the sense of guilt or of an evil conscience endured by the guilty, or the relation between the evil act committed and the consequent suffering inflicted."[31] Now Christ bore the chastisement only in so far as He, the spotless God-man, from the nature of His personality, *could* do this. It is on this account, with all appearance of orthodoxy, an unintelligent and withal wholly unscriptural consideration, which gives rise to the question whether then He also endured the full measure of the sufferings of those who are lost, the "*pœnæ infernales.*" His sacrifice is of infinite value before God, not because He underwent everything in every particular which every sinner deserved, but because a perfect obedience and love like this counterbalances the guilt of humanity, and outweighs all its consequences, taken as *one* whole. God does not show mercy to the world, as it were, ledger in hand, but royally does He remit the ten thousand talents to the last farthing, where humanity has, in *this* Man, perfectly glorified and fully satisfied Him. And that God has so abundantly done, and is doing this, by this method, is the fruit of a grace which freely gave all things to sinners, without in any way infringing on its own sacred rights (comp. § cx. 7). The sacrifice of Christ in its totality is, in the sight of God, the equivalent for the whole sin of the world.

6. *In consequence thereof God in Christ has shown mercy to the world in its*

[30] [*The ἔνδειξις of the Apostle would have been a mere ἐπίδειξις*, best gives the play upon words of the Dutch original].—*Tr.*

[31] Ebrard.

totality, and every one who believes in Him is in point of fact discharged from the guilt and punishment of sin. The history of Israel has become that of humanity.[32] The satisfaction became the ground of the propitiation—ἱλασμός—as this again of the reconciliation—καταλλαγή—of the hostile world with God. God needed not to be reconciled to man, but man to be reconciled and reunited to God; but this was, according to the Gospel, impossible alike on the side of God and of man, except by the intervention of the indispensable but all-sufficient offering of atonement. It is not God who is reconciled, but He Himself in Christ makes reconciliation for sins, and reunites thus what was separated by sin.[33] This reconciliation thus affects the world in its totality; not the world of the elect alone, as some obstinately persisted in seeing in Scripture, though in utter conflict with John iii. 16; 1 John ii. 2; but the world of humanity conceived of in its fullest extent; by which it is not asserted that every one of its inhabitants will be saved, but only that the formerly hostile world now stands, so far as God is concerned, in a reconciled relationship towards Him, *i.e.*, one in which the claim of God has been satisfied, so that no one to whom the Gospel is proclaimed now perishes because of his sin in itself, but only on account of his unbelief. On God's side all is now taken away which could make a separation, unless any should themselves choose to remain separated from Him. The ministry of reconciliation[34] does not proclaim, God *will* forgive your trespasses if you return to Him; but God *has* shown mercy—only believe, and it *is* your portion in Christ. In Him God's grace is not simply revealed, sealed, rendered attainable, but procured, and on God's part conferred on every one who will receive it; and no unhappy confusion of ideas between the doctrine of predestination and that of reconciliation may be allowed to detract aught from the freshness and kindliness of the proclamation of the Gospel. Only where, as is a right and duty, a distinction is made between the power and the fruits of the death of Christ on the cross, has the "*sufficienter pro omnibus, efficienter pro electis*"[35] its unquestionable right. Without arbitrary limitation Christ died for ungodly ones;[36] but only those who believe can boast: "Hereby we have known the love, that He hath laid down His life for us,"[37] and *know* by faith that they *have* in reality redemption in Him. What is the soul and centre of this redemption the conscience would yet testify, even though Paul had not described it (Ephes. i. 7) as the forgiveness of transgressions according to the riches of God's grace. For those who are in Christ there is henceforth no more condemnation;[38] God imputes not their sins to them;[39] and the highest blessedness conferred upon the sinner, already sung in the thirty-second Psalm, is their enduring possession. Peace with God, boldness before Him, joy of faith also under afflictions, and a well-grounded hope of everlasting life, is in consequence thereof their portion;[40] and even their death proves nothing against this tru h, and alters nothing in this happiness, because they no longer die for their sins,

[32] Ps. lxxviii. 38a.
[33] Ps. lxv. 3; lxxix. 9; Rom. v. 8, 9.
[34] 2 Cor. v. 18.
[35] Calvin.
[36] Rom. v. 6.
[37] 1 John iii. 16.
[38] Rom. viii. 1.
[39] 2 Cor. v. 19.
[40] Rom. v. 1—5.

much less in them, but are even by death delivered from the body of sin, and translated into the perfect blessedness in Christ. His "It is finished" is the solid ground on which they can repose the dying head: "*ubi crux, ibi lux.*" "Ubi tuta firmaque infirmis securitas et requies, nisi in vulneribus Salvatoris?"[41] But in nothing else does this "only consolation in life and death" find its foundation, than in the fact that the Christian is by faith so spiritually one with Christ, that he may regard the Saviour's death for sin as *his own* death.

7. To sum up all that has been said: we may in the most sound sense assert that God ever of pure grace forgives us our sins on account of (*propter*), through (*per*), and as a result of fellowship with (*in*) Christ Jesus. If, on this remission of guilt, the natural consequences of unrighteousness are not immediately taken away, yet where they remain they lose for the pacified conscience the character of punishment, and from the verdict of eternity the redeemed one is for ever delivered. Yet this benefit, however unspeakably great, taken in itself alone, can give us no right to speak of a perfect redemption, if a salvation which has been effected entirely outside the man, were now also to remain permanently a benefit external to himself. The contrary is proclaimed to us equally by the nature of the case, by history, and by experience, which, wholly in harmony with the Gospel, bear unequivocal testimony no less to the sanctifying power, than to the reconciling power of the Lord's sacrifice. *At the same time with the guilt is, in principle, the power and dominion of sin destroyed in the sinner thus accepted; and precisely thereby the moral aim of the redemption in Christ is attained in its beginning even here.* The "peace through the blood of the cross" is at the same time a declaration of war against the world and sin, in and around us, literally in every form. The final aim of forgiveness is sanctification;[42] and no means is better adapted than this forgiveness of sins to attain to this moral end. Yea, this very benefit fills the believer with deep hatred against sin, which is condemned on the cross; with ardent love for the Lord, who died on the cross; and with filial gratitude towards the Father, who on the cross manifested and glorified His grace. This threefold impelling power, where it truly lives, cannot but banish and slay all that offers opposition to it; and it is impossible truly to glory in the cross without at the same time being inwardly crucified to the world.[43] The history of Paul is the great proof of this truth,[44] and besides him the history of all who were able to testify: "I have only one passion, and that is Himself, Himself,"[45] and again, "*Amor meus crucifixus est.*"[46] For him who with Christ has died to sin, it is morally impossible still to live in its communion;[47] and, both for the individual man and for humanity, the true power for renewing is afforded in the Gospel of reconciliation.[48] Belief in forgiving grace infuses so much delight in what is good, so much courage

[41] Bernard of Clairvaux.
[42] John xvii. 19; Gal. i. 4; Titus ii. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 24; 1 John ii. 1a.
[43] Gal. vi. 14.
[44] Gal. ii. 20.
[45] Count von Zinzendorf.
[46] A. M. van Schurman.
[47] Rom. vi. 2, *sqq.*
[48] 2 Cor. v. 17, 18.

and power to accomplish it in the once despondent heart, that a continued service of sin is absolutely irreconcilable therewith. Hence it is that the Lord couldregard His death as at the same time a triumph over the kingdom of darkness,[49] whose prince was on the cross not only disarmed, but as a vanquished one was led in open triumph.[50] Christ is born *in* us of faith in that which He has accomplished *for* us, and Christ in us cannot possibly obtain a form in the heart without the old man becoming crucified. Thus it is, and thus it must be, since the old rhyme continues true :

> "Das Kreuz zu Golgotha kann dich nicht von dem Bösen,
> Wenn es nicht auch in *dir* wird aufgerichtet, erlösen."[51]

8. *The atonement thus effected extends not only to the Present, but also to the Past and the Future, yea, embraces heaven and earth; and is so perfect that nothing needs to be added thereto by any one.* That the sacrifice of Christ cleanses not simply from some sins—like that of the Old Covenant—but from all, even from the greatest, is the express teaching of the New Testament. Therefrom are not excepted those sins into which the believer, through weakness, constantly relapses; and there is not a single reason in favour of the opinion of some of the older Rationalists, that the Gospel promises forgiveness only for those sins which were committed before conversion. The opposite is apparent from Heb. ix. 12 ; xiii. 8 ; 1 John ii. 2a, and other places. Only *one* absolutely unpardonable sin is spoken of, a sin which certainly no true believer will commit (§ lxxviii. 7). On the contrary, the New Testament affords sufficient ground for speaking, with our older dogmatists, of a "retro-active force" of the merits of Christ, inasmuch, namely, as those sins also which had their origin under the Old Covenant were atoned for—symbolically indeed by the sacrifice of beasts, but—in point of fact by His sacrifice, although it cannot be determined to what extent the saints of the Old Dispensation knew and understood the higher significance even of the Great Day of Atonement itself. Thus much, however, is certain, that they were justified only through faith in the same grace of God, which was first fully manifested in Christ, but in which the institution of the sacrificial ritual gave sufficient reason to hope.[52] For the Divine vision, unquestionably, that which in the fulness of time took place on Calvary, was no temporal but an eternal act, which He could never overlook, when He turned His regard to the descendants of Adam. Although this idea is not contained in the last words of Rev. xiii. 8, whence, as the result of a less exact exegesis, it has sometimes been derived, it follows of itself from the recognition of an eternal Plan of Salvation (§ lxxxii.), and it equally explains every manifestation of God's forgiving grace, which was made even under the Old Covenant. But if in reality *all* who are sanctified are thus, by this one offering, made perfect unto eternity,[53] then is it also not simply superfluous, but criminal, yea, ridiculous, for any creature to attempt to add anything on his part to that which is infinite

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[49] John xii. 31.
[50] Col. ii. 15 ; Heb. ii. 14, 15.
[51] The cross of Calvary can never set thee free,
Unless in *thine* heart it deeply rooted be.
[52] Heb. ix. 26 ; xi. 40.
[53] Heb. x. 14.

and Divine; and the Protestant opposition to the Romish sacrifice of the Mass, conceived of as a repetition of the sacrifice of the cross, is in principle entirely justified.[54] "To wish to supplement (*ergänzen*) this atonement is to take away the essential validity of the same, and its essential effect. At most we can only speak of mystical after-throbbings of the sufferings of Christ, as of mystical anticipations of the same, Col. i. 24; but these are apparent, not in the spiritual *thank-offering* of the Christian worship, but in the actual sufferings of the members of Christ for Christ's sake."[55] So little even is this perfect sacrifice, as far as its effect and operation are concerned, confined to this little earth, that—according to a suggestive hint of the Apostle, which gives us rather material for conjecture than for deciding[56]—the cross may be regarded as the centre of reconciliation for all in heaven and earth which has become separated by sin.

9. *Even apart from the fruit of the High-priestly activity of the Lord upon earth, this Atonement is the highest revelation and glorification of all God's perfections in harmonious connection.* That Christ, after all this, is to be regarded not simply as *a*, but *the* High Priest, without whose intervention no communion with God was possible for us, but in and through whom it is fully assured, could hardly need recalling to mind, were it not that this affords us at the same time an opportunity of earnestly protesting against every theory or practice whereby the cross of Christ as the *conditio sine quâ non* of our everlasting salvation is made void.[57] Now, however, the cross also is presented before our eyes in a light which reveals in it the power and wisdom of God[58] in a manner which causes us to exclaim with the Christian poet, "The creation is, as compared with this proceeding, merely the prime colour of God's power."[59] Yea, truly, "the cross is a star without rays;"[60] and we said too little, when we asserted that thereon the highest demand was satisfied. Power and wisdom, righteousness and truth, holiness and grace are here so harmoniously blended, that the word of the Psalmist, Ps. lxxxv. 10, 11, nowhere received its fulfilment so gloriously as here. Even the Apostolic doxology, Rom. xi. 33—36; Ephes. i. 3, and other places, here remains below the truth. Only the song of the redeemed in heaven, Rev. v. 9—13, expresses this fulfilment in a manner at all satisfactory to our feelings. But from the Church triumphant our eye must, in this domain also, return to the Church militant.

10. *By this New Testament doctrine of Atonement must its later historical development and its doctrinal definition in the Christian Church be tested; and the latter, if needful, be modified in accordance therewith.* It arises from the nature of the case, that in all ages the Gospel of Reconciliation, even where it has been constantly maintained, has been in many respects apprehended in a one-sided and imperfect manner. It is the particular task of the History of Doctrines to furnish an outline in all its extent of the different modes of viewing this doctrine, and that of Christian Dogmatics to be serviceable as far as possible on this point, not merely for the development and maintenance, but also for the purifying and perfection, of the Church

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[54] Compare *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 80.
[55] Lange.
[56] Col. i. 19, 20.
[57] 1 Cor. i. 17.
[58] 1 Cor. i. 23, 24.
[59] Vollenhove.
[60] Hamann.

Confession (§ xix.). Of this only a few hints can here be given. On the whole we may say that there can scarcely be shown a single point of view from which the death of the Lord is presented in the Gospel, which has not at one time or another been brought into prominence; but besides, much more was done in the first ages of the Church for finding the right formula regarding the person, than that regarding the work of the Redeemer.

From two sides more especially do the earliest ecclesiastical writers consider the sufferings and death of Christ: as a *ransom-price*, and as a propitiatory *sacrifice*. Concerning the former, it was the question whether this ransom-price must be regarded as paid to God or to Satan. Men like Irenæus, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Leo the Great, Gregory the Great, and others, we see attaching themselves with a certain degree of pleasure to the conception of redemption as a victory obtained over the devil, in consequence of a sort of deceit, of which he became the victim,—a conception which we see continuing till the Middle Ages, yea, up to and after the time of the Reformation. "In hamo incarnationis captus est Satan."[61] As a propitiatory sacrifice, on the other hand, which displays a substitutionary character, is the death of the Lord on the cross especially gloried in by Justin Martyr, Gregory Nazianzen, Chrysostom, Athanasius, Augustine, and others. That Athanasius brought the appreciation of this sacrifice into close connection with the confession of the Godhead of the Lord, as Augustine with that of the fall and the universal corruption of human nature, is only what was to be expected; but yet we should err if we were to suppose that what is properly speaking the doctrine of satisfaction, in the later ecclesiastical sense of this term, was expressly advocated by these Fathers. The word *satisfactio*, derived from the process of civil law, was already employed by Tertullian; but concerning the thing itself there prevailed with many, in consequence of various circumstances, a certain vagueness of conception; and we hear even an Augustine exclaim: "Sunt stulti, qui dicunt, non poterat aliter Sapientia Dei homines liberare, nisi susciperet hominem, et nasceretur a feminâ, et a peccatoribus omnia illa pateretur. Quibus dicimus, poterat omnino, sed si aliter faceret, similiter stultitiæ vestræ displiceret."[62]—"Those are fools who say that the Wisdom of God could not otherwise redeem men, than by assuming human nature, and being born of a woman, and suffering all these things at the hand of sinners. To whom we say, He could, no doubt; but if He had done otherwise, it would have been equally displeasing to your folly." The endeavour also to determine what were properly speaking the fruits, for the individual and for humanity, of the sacrifice of the cross, here and there led to conclusions differing not a little; and while, according to Augustine, they were for the benefit only of the elect, Origen would have them extend not only to this world, but also to the realm of spirits in a far more extensive sphere. As well as the strictly objective view of the Lord's death, is found also the more subjective and moral one, which regards it as an example to His people, and a renewing power; while also the later mystical interpretation of the different elements of the Lord's suffering had already its representatives in an earlier age.

[61] Gregory the Great.

[62] *De ag. Chr.*, c. 11

A strictly systematic presentation of the connection between the death of the Lord and the forgiveness of sins was first given by Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, towards the end of the eleventh century (1093—1098), in his celebrated treatise, *Cur Deus homo.* With the rejection of every connection between the death of Christ and the paying off of the devil, which had been formerly supposed, he brought this death into direct relationship with the righteousness of God, and regarded it as a satisfaction to the requirement of this righteousness, absolutely indispensable, but also in itself more than sufficient to this end. Sin, namely, thus he reasons, robs God of His honour, and God owes it to Himself to maintain this honour. "*Necesse est, ut omne peccatum aut pœna, aut satisfactio sequatur.*" This *satisfactio* must not only equal, but surpass the dishonour done,—in other words, be an equivalent of infinite value, as opposed to an infinite debt of guilt. Such a satisfaction sinful man naturally cannot on his part give, and yet God will not allow man to perish, since His salvation must counterbalance the loss of the angels who have fallen; there remains, therefore, nothing but that God should make this satisfaction to Himself. "*Ergo necesse est, ut eam faciat Deus-homo.*" For as man, the Son of God belongs to the same nature in which sin was committed; as God, He can present a sacrifice of absolutely inestimable value. This He accomplishes, not by His holy life—since as a moral creature He in any case owed this to God, even on His own account; but by wholly voluntarily doing that which He, the Sinless One, needed not to do—namely, giving Himself up to the suffering of death. "*Tradere seipsum morti ad honorem Dei, hoc ex debito non exigit Deus ab ullo.*" This voluntary deed of love—a "*bonum amabile*"—could not remain without response on the Father's side; as being more than is demanded—*opus supererogationis*—it must be rewarded; and, since the Son already has all that the Father possesses, this reward must be applied to the benefit of others. The merits of the Mediator, greater than were strictly demanded, the Father henceforth imputes to the sinner, from whom He has no more to demand, because another has afforded satisfaction in his place.

Scarcely can we, even after this brief sketch, proceed to criticise the system of Anselm, without rendering sincere homage to the logical acuteness therein displayed, and the strong moral earnestness with which the absolute reprobation due to sin and the inflexible character of God's righteousness is recognised by this daring thinker. Also the effort to render evident the necessity on God's part for the death of the Lord, merits something else than haughty contempt; and it cannot be denied that many a side of the presentation here given finds countenance and defence in particular utterances of the Apostolic Scripture. Yet it is at least equally apparent that this theory in its totality, tested by the letter and spirit of the whole of the Gospel, displays considerable gaps, and moreover also rests upon so tottering a foundation, that it cannot possibly be regarded as an adequate expression of the Christian doctrine of atonement. An arithmetical proposition, such as is here brought forth, has something about it by which we are involuntarily repelled, rather than led to a grateful adoration of God's love in Christ. No wonder; not the love, but rather the offended majesty, is here the basis of the whole work of redemption; and a conflict between

God's righteousness and grace is presupposed, which in reality is altogether inadmissible. Anselm proceeds from an abstract idea of right, such as is applicable on earth to the relation between creditor and debtor, and brings into prominence in a one-sided manner the juridical aspect of the case, *at he expense* alike of the ethical and the mystical. His demonstration is a remarkable example of dialectic and speculative acumen, and tends to remove even the last veil of mystery, but even on this account awakens a misgiving. He, no doubt, shows how God can be reconciled to the sinner without the sacrifice of His honour, but not how the sinner can truly be reconciled to God; how the guilt can be cancelled, it is true, but not how the enmity can be overcome and taken out of the way. It appears, moreover, from this point of view, as though the Christ had come into the world only to suffer and to die; of the significance of the *obedientia activa*, in connection with the redemption of the world, not the slightest mention is here made. Since, finally, little or no reference is made in this scheme to the necessity for, or the nature of, the spiritual union with Christ by faith; the merits of Christ thus imputed to the sinner remain inwardly foreign to him, and thereby at least a striking appearance of arbitrariness must rest upon the Divine mode of legal procedure, however happy in its consequences. In this last respect especially, Bernard of Clairvaux, in consequence of his sympathy with the Pauline doctrine of justification—stood far higher than Anselm, as is apparent amongst other things, from his saying, "*Satisfecit caput pro membris, Christus pro visceribus ejus*," "The Head made satisfaction for the members, Christ for His body." Once more, as far as the English Archbishop is concerned, he himself closed his demonstration with the language of humility: "*Si quid diximus, quod corrigendum sit, non renuo correctionem, si rationaliter fit*," and, in truth, he very soon found that his theory was destined to meet with fully as much opposition as approbation. Abelard, especially, was a leader in this opposition, who, leaning to the other extreme, found the secret of (a merely subjective) redemption in nothing but the power of love, which is called forth in the sinner by the manifestation of God's grace in Christ, and becomes the natural source of his moral improvement. Robert Pulleyn and Peter Lombard also inclined more to this latter opinion than to that of Anselm. On the other hand, we see Hugo de St. Victor approaching nearer to Anselm, whose theory was very soon further developed in details by Bonaventura and Thomas Aquinas; yet not without the doctrine of the "*divina acceptatio*," proclaimed by Duns Scotus, being opposed to Anselm's doctrine of the "*satisfactio superabundans*." Duns Scotus doubted the infinite value of the merits of Christ, although acknowledging that God in His grace *regarded* them as an equivalent for the sins of the world. As opposed to all these calculations, Mysticism not seldom gave the rein to a sensuous-devout play on the blood and wounds of the Saviour; but, at the same time, men like Wicliff and Wesel sought to bring the doctrine of satisfaction into more direct connection with the life of the conscience and of practical piety. To this movement the Reformers straightway attached themselves; but however much they hold with the main thought of Anselm, and proceed from like principles, we should yet do them injustice if we were to suppose that they simply repeated that which had been said four centuries before. In two

respects at least we see in their case a great advance; herein, namely, that much more than Anselm, they attached due importance to the active obedience of Christ, and at the same time that they laid the most powerful stress upon the absolute necessity of innermost communion with Him—*unio mystica*. Calvin, especially, is evidently striving here and there in his interpretation of Scripture, to throw off—on this point also—the yoke of Scholasticism.

Although after the Reformation both Evangelical churches held in the main the same doctrine of satisfaction and atonement, yet there were not wanting in either of them differences and controversy with regard also to these "*magnalia Dei*." In the Lutheran Church it was asserted by A. Osiander that Christ only by virtue of His Divine nature was our righteousness; by F. Stancar, on the other hand, that He could be this only and exclusively as to His humanity; while in the Reformed Church the controversy between Gomarus and Arminius became, at the same time, a controversy as to the doctrine of a particular or a universal satisfaction. On both sides we see, under the influence of the Scholasticism of the seventeenth century, the ecclesiastical system spun out with cobweb fineness; but, at the same time, and in part even earlier, a powerful assault directed against this main truth of the Gospel. Notably this was the case on the part of the Socinians, who—denying all direct connection between the death of Christ and the forgiveness of sins—explained that He died only to afford confirmation to the doctrine of the forgiving love of God, taught by Himself; to give the most sublime example, and through suffering to pass over into resurrection and glory; while they even employed that which the Apostle (1 Cor. xv. 17) teaches concerning the value of His resurrection, as a weapon against the necessity for, and the power of, His cross. In order to combat them, Hugo Grotius sought to soften down the doctrine of the Church, by advocating in its place the theory of the so-called *Acceptilatio*, which amounted to this, that Christ had made satisfaction in His death, not to the demand of God's outraged honour, but to that of the moral order of the world, *justitiæ Dei rectoriæ;* so that God punished sin in Him, as in an example, and had allowed this judgment to be equivalent to a judgment upon all; much as in the decimation of a mutinous Roman legion those who were punished suffered for the other guilty ones as well as for themselves.[63] His presentation we may look upon as the forerunner of many others of the tempered orthodoxy, which, in accommodation to prevalent views, surrendered one stone after another of the old edifice. First we see controverted the doctrine of the active obedience (Piscator, Töllner); then the older doctrine of satisfaction; finally, the whole doctrine of redemption by the blood of the cross (Steinbart, Eberhard, Löffler, and others). Rationalism denies it, while the older Supranaturalism, with a result not always equally happy, sought upon this point also to return to the "Biblical simplicity" (Storr, Morus, Döderlein, Reinhardt). The different philosophic schools after Kant all made their preponderating influence felt in the treatment also of this dogma; and the speculative doctrine of atonement magnanimously allows the Church to retain the old

[63] See his *Defensio Fidei Catholicæ de satisfact. Christi*, 1617.

names for matters of an entirely different nature. It saw in the Biblical account of the Lord's death, for the philosophic idea, the removal of the opposition between the finite and the infinite, but could only attain to an atonement endlessly to be effected, never to one actually accomplished by the historic Christ. A somewhat higher appreciation of this last, especially of Christ's active obedience, is shown in the system of Schleiermacher, who, in place of the magical view rejected by him, favoured a sort of mystical view, according to which the redeeming and reconciling work of Christ consisted in this, that He receives believers "into the efficacy of His consciousness of God, and into the communion of His untroubled blessedness.[64] "Manifestly a use of the *expressions* only of the Church is here retained."[65] Yet in part from this school have proceeded the men who, shortly before and during the second half of this century, have striven after greater depth and clearness of conception in connection with this "*magnum mysterium*,"—a Nitzsch, a Dorner, and others. The most renowned dogmatists of our time have devoted special labour to this particular point; on the Reformed side, Schweitzer, Ebrard, Lange; on the Lutheran, Martensen, Menken, Stier, Philippi, and Hoffmann. Between these two last a controversy is being carried on in the present day, as to the doctrine of the substitutionary sufferings, not unlike that which was waged in France between E. de Pressensé and the advocates of the Soteriology of the "Reveil;" and by many it is felt that on this domain, also, the last word has not yet been spoken, the last question is by no means yet answered. Yet, on the whole, we witness more and more a reaction against the superficial mode of regarding the subject, which, out of aversion for the scholastic form in which the doctrine of atonement was usually presented, overlooked the priceless contents of that doctrine itself.—As far as Holland is concerned, in a modified form and on a smaller scale, the controversy which broke forth elsewhere, has also been waged here; and while the first half of the present century heard the doctrine of the Church, in a moderate sense, upheld according to the Scriptures of the New Testament,[66] it was, at the same time, a witness of the fact that the Groningen School opposed with all its might the satisfaction-theory of Anselm, and, indeed, the mysterious side of the whole idea of atonement. The second half finds the advocates of the so-called doctrines of general and particular redemption still in arms against each other, while, on the other hand, modern Naturalism has, in point of fact, inscribed this whole dogma also in the list of now useless antiquities. Modern orthodoxy on her part recognises the absolute necessity for striving as far as possible after a clearer presentation of the Gospel doctrine, and the continued maintenance of the Confession, so far as it is in harmony with Scripture, but has not the hardihood to flatter herself with the hope that she will be able to remove even the last veil, however confident she is that the Gospel of reconciliation, as apprehended by her, is capable of being sufficiently defended.

11. *The Gospel doctrine of Atonement has still constantly to be defended*

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[64] See his *Christl. Glaube*, §§ 100—102.
[65] Strauss.
[66] H. E. Vinke, *Prize Treatise*, Soc. of the Hague, 1835.

against the objections which are raised thereto on different sides.—The principal may be reduced to objections of an *exegetical-historical*, or of a *critical-philosophic* kind. As concerns the former, it is asserted that the doctrine of atonement by the sacrifice of Christ is contradicted in some places of Scripture; that it must be regarded as a fruit of Apostolic accommodation to Jewish prejudices; and that in its real nature it is not older than the dark Middle Ages. But Scripture places like Matt. ix. 2; xviii. 35; Luke xv. 20—24, where mention is made of the forgiveness of sins without a Mediator, lose their enigmatical character so soon as we consider that the Lord, before His own sufferings and death, could not well more fully express Himself, concerning the atonement in His death, to minds incapable of apprehending the deeper truths of His kingdom; that besides, silence is by no means the same thing as denial; and that the demand to see the whole doctrine of salvation presented in a single parable, is nothing less than unreasonableness itself. Precisely because the Lord knew Himself to be the fore-ordained Lamb of God, could He with perfect right forgive sins even before His death; and safely might He leave the further unveiling of this mystery to His witnesses under the enlightening of the Holy Spirit.—Of accommodation on the part of the Apostles, we have here the less room to think, because their teaching, on this point also, was based on the word of the Master; all agree therein, not merely as opposed to Jews and Christians of the Jews, but as opposed to Gentiles and Christians of the Gentiles, and that which they teach was in principle already proclaimed by Isaiah and John the Baptist.—And as to Anselm, notwithstanding all its acknowledged weak sides, his presentment contains a kernel of eternal truth, of which even heathen antiquity had a presentiment, and which is proclaimed in the Scriptures, acknowledged by the Church of the earliest ages, as well as of later times, and assented to by every awakened conscience,—namely, that no expiation of sin can be effected without a sacrifice, and that the sacrifice really outweighing the guilt of a whole world, could be provided only by God Himself. To this extent it is not without reason that it has been said: "Every belief in a supranatural and necessary redemption through the death of Jesus, becomes a clear and consistent idea only in the theory of Anselm."[67] That the Christ *must* suffer all these things, would, according to Scripture, have remained true, on God's side also, even though Anselm had never existed.

As regards the *critical-philosophic* objections: those on this side do not cease to assert that an atonement such as we confess in accordance with the Gospel, is *partly* superfluous and also impossible, *partly* unworthy of God and of man, and *partly*, finally, fruitless as concerns the bulk of the human race; yea, even fatal, and subversive of virtue and morality.—But the word superfluous will here be repeated only by such as have learnt to forgive themselves their sins, and have never yet looked upon their transgressions in the light of trespasses against a holy God. The acquittance signed by the debtor in his own favour has extremely little value, and the good news, "To all sinners sin shall be forgiven, and hell shall be no more,"[68]

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[67] Hase.

[68] "Allen Sündern soll vergeben, und die Hölle nicht mehr sein."—SCHILLER.

is wanting in all significance, when it has no better foundation than a poetic-optimistic sentiment. Sin is and remains no mere weakness which stands in need of healing, but a fault which has need of expiation; and, however impossible on the part of man, with God this must be possible. It is true, the God of Naturalism cannot take away the punishment of sin, because from that standpoint there is no such thing as positive chastisements, but only natural and inevitable consequences of sins. But the God of Revelation can in His own miraculous way restore that which the sinner in the way of nature has destroyed, and cause to arise a new condition of things which is not the continuation, but the opposition, to the former condemned one.—Unworthy of God would this be, if it took place at the expense of one of His attributes; but, we saw it, here the very opposite is the case: God is just as little changed as moved to grace, and "the Moloch who must see blood, in order to be propitiated," exists nowhere else than in the imagination of an equally ungenerous as impotent polemic. He who regards it as absolutely irreconcilable with God's wisdom and love that the one should suffer for the others, may, if he dares to say so, contradict a countless number of facts in history and daily experience which cannot be denied, without any the more compelling us to give up belief in God; and whoever has once seriously taken into account the principle of solidarity everywhere existing in the domain of morals, will no longer despise as an absurdity the teaching of the Gospel, "one for all, and all in one." "Il y a eu un homme, qui a réalisé pleinement cette solidarité, que les plus sublimes sacrifices n'avaient fait jusque-là que pressentir; c'est volontairement que Jésus a souffert. Si ses souffrances restent un mystère, c'est un mystère d'amour. Nous le comprendrions, si nos cœurs etaient assez larges pour le saisir."[69] Much here remains enigmatical, but unworthy of God—nothing; and that it is beneath the dignity of man to be saved by grace, through the intervention of a suffering and dying Saviour, can be soberly maintained only by those in whom all true seriousness is yet wanting. He who in reality feels his deep unworthiness,[70] thankfully grasps the proffered rope of deliverance without shrinking from the mystery of redeeming love, because he cannot in the long run do without it; and much more overwhelming than this mystery is the absurdity to which one must necessarily be driven who refuses to see in the cross the propitiatory altar of the world, the tree of life.—And, lastly, as regards the effects of this power of God unto salvation, whoever has really remained unconverted under the preaching of the word of reconciliation, so much the worse for him, since no higher power of God unto redemption than this is revealed, or is even conceivable; and he who abuses the doctrine of grace as a cloak for the flesh makes indeed Christ to be a minister of sin, and himself ripe for the eternal judgment of God; but he cannot on that account change into a lie the truth itself, which is the highest, and indeed the only consolation for every spirit hungering after salvation. On this account all truly Christian theology remains permanently a *theologia crucis;* and even the High-priestly activity of the Lord *in heaven* cannot prepare for us anything higher than has already on earth been procured for us by His obedience unto death.

[69] Eugène Bersier.

[70] ἑλάσσων ἑαυτοῦ (Plato).

Compare the well-known writings of BAEHR, KURTZ, KEIL, and others, on the Mosaic sacrifices; R. ENGELS, *Geloofsroem*, etc. (1835); H. E. VINKE, *Prijsverh.*, Soc. of the Hague (1835); D. CHANTEPIE DE LA SAUSSAYE, *Bijbelstud. over den Br. aan de Hebreën* (1860); J. J. VAN TOORENENBERGEN, *Bijdragen*, etc. (1865), p. 167, *sqq.*; A. THOLUCK, *Die wahre Weihe des Zweiflers* (1839), p. 56, *sqq.*; A. SARTORIUS, *Die Lehre von der heil. Liebe*, ii. (1844); J. H. A. EBRARD, *Die Lehre von der stellvertr. Genugthuung* (1857). A number of important papers relating to this subject, by GESS, WEISZACKER, DIESTEL, RITZSCHL, and others, in the *Jahrbb. für deutsche Theol.* of 1857—1860. A good hand-edition of ANSELM, *Cur Deus homo*, has been given by O. F. FRITZSCHE (1858). See further F. P. J. SIBMACHER ZIJNEN, *Spec. quo Ans. et Calv. placita de redemt. inter se conferuntur* (1852). On Schleiermacher's doctrine of atonement, F. BONIFAS, *La doctrine de la Rédemption par S.* (1865). On the above-mentioned principle of solidarity, as applied to the doctrine of the Atonement, E. BERSIER, *La Solidarité* (1870) [Engl. trans. under the title: *The Oneness of the Race, in its Fall and in its Future*].

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

The place of the High Priest in the economy of the Old Testament.—Further illustration of the Scriptural basis for the doctrine of the High-priesthood of the Saviour upon earth.—The significance of the sacrifice in the heathen systems of religion.—The propitiatory sacrifice in the spirit of Mosaism.—The difference and resemblance between the ideas of expiation and of punishment.—How can we be said to be at the same time *dearly* purchased, and *freely* justified?[71]—Treatment and maintenance of the principal Soteriological places of Scripture.—Does there in reality prevail a sufficient unanimity on this point among all the writers of the New Testament?—Whence so much that is indefinite and unsatisfactory in the Church teaching of the first three centuries concerning the atonement? — Anselm's doctrine of satisfaction, compared with that of Bernard of Clairvaux.—Further indication of the difference between the first-named and the Reformers.—In what sense did Calvin teach the doctrine of satisfaction?—The doctrine as to salvation of the Mystics in the Romish and Protestant Churches.—Is full justice done to the active obedience of the Lord in the Symbolical Writings of the Reformed Church?—Did Christ suffer the "*pœnæ infernales*"?—May peculiar efficacy, for the expiation of definite sins, be ascribed to particular parts of the suffering of the Lord?—Criticism of the doctrine of the so-called surety-sufferings.—The accurate idea of the remission of sins.—What is the significance of the Saviour's complaint upon the cross? (Matt. xxvii. 46).—Can we, in accordance with the Gospel, speak of our *right* to salvation?—To what extent does the later history of the dogma show an advance?—The doctrine of Atonement among the Moravians.—That of Schleiermacher.—That of the speculative and empirical philosophy of our century.—What position has the Groningen School in Holland assumed towards this last?—The Cross and Modern Naturalism.—The controversy between the broad and the narrow view of the doctrine of the Atonement.—How is it possible in the present day, even from the standpoint of Orthodoxy, to "make the cross of Christ of no effect"?

SECTION CXII.—CONCLUSION.

In heaven Christ exercises his High-priestly activity, as well by the sacrifice of His constant intercession on behalf of all His people, as by the continual blessing which He confers upon them from within the innermost sanctuary. This heavenly intercession must

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[71] [ἠγοράσθητε τιμῆς, δικαιούμενοι δωρεάν; cf. Rom. iii. 24; 1 Cor. vi. 20.]

by no means be conceived of as the completion of an imperfect activity on earth; but, on the contrary, as the crowning of a completed one. Both are most intimately connected with each other, and are of like importance for faith and life.

1. As is well known, the work of the High Priest under the Old Covenant consisted in the offering of sacrifices, in prayers, and in the act of blessing; and in this respect also Christ merits to be called his antitype, that each one of these priestly functions is most perfectly discharged by Him. If He already accomplished them on earth, He also continues them unceasingly in heaven. His intercession, especially, is that to which we are emphatically directed in the Scriptures of the New Testament, and which now also especially calls for our attention. It is true He also continues His action of blessing, even as He left the earth, in a symbolical manner extending to His disciples His blessing;[1] but this latter act may be more fitly spoken of in the contemplation of His Kingly office. If that side of the High-priestly work, of which we have now to speak, has been now and then erroneously regarded and judged of in the Christian Church, and in the Reformed Church—under the influence of a one-sided Predestinationism—has sometimes been under-rated, this must the more urge us to contemplate with an enhanced interest this side also of the Lord's redeeming activity, and thus at the same time to bring to a fit conclusion our examination of the previous section.

2. *There is every reason for believing that the High-priestly work wrought by the Lord upon earth is still unceasingly continued by Him in heaven.* Of course here, too, the question as to the Scriptural ground for this point of our confession presents itself before all others; and, next to this, we have to show the intimate connection thereof with all which we believe on good grounds concerning the Lord. If He lives personally in heaven, and if that life is entirely consecrated to God the Father,[2] then certainly it cannot be better conceived of than as a life of unceasing prayer; and if His people already when He was here below occupied so large a place in His High-priestly intercession,[3] there is no single reason for supposing that it is otherwise with Him after His exaltation. He expressly declares indeed to His disciples that at His prayer the Comforter would come to them;[4] while His assurance of John xvi. 26, 27, is only in apparent contradiction therewith, and is designed only to imply that the Father did not need first to be moved by the intercession of the Son, in order to manifest His favour to the friends of the Son. It is thus wholly in the spirit of Jesus that the Apostles make repeated mention of the High-priestly intervention of the exalted Redeemer on behalf of His own. Notably is this the case with Paul in Rom. viii. 34, and—in harmony alike with Paul, and with the whole Symbolics of the Old Testament—with the writer to the Hebrews, ch. vii. 25; ix. 24. The conception is derived from that of the High Priest in Israel, who on the great Day of Atonement,

[1] Luke xxiv. 50.
[2] Rom. vi. 10.
[3] Luke xxii. 31, 32; John xvii. 9, *sqq.*
[4] John xiv. 16.

after the death of the victim, entered with the blood into the most holy place, in order thus to make reconciliation for the sins of the people; and the whole connection shows us that here nothing less is intended than such propitiatory intervention, ἐντυγχάνειν. In a sense not far different is the Lord accordingly, in 1 John ii. 1, termed the Advocate —παρκάλητος—of His people with the Father, while His perfect qualification for this task is indicated by the mention of His character as the "Righteous One." As the Lord terms the Holy Spirit His Paraclete with the disciples after His departure from the earth, so is He Himself their Paraclete with the Father; because by reason of His whole High-priestly activity, He may be termed "the propitiation—ἱλασμός—not for their sins only, but for those of the whole world."[5]

3. *This High-priestly activity of the Lord in heaven, far indeed from detracting from the sufficiency of His sacrifice on earth, presents, on the contrary, the indispensableness and perfectness of this sacrifice in so much the clearer light.* This will become apparent to us if we seek to penetrate still more deeply into the peculiar character and nature of this intervention of the Lord. Nothing urges us to understand in any other than its natural sense that which we read in the Gospel concerning a praying on the part of the Exalted One. No doubt we have not to think of any intreating and pleading, properly so called, by which the Father must first be moved to a manifestation of grace: what the Lord (John xvi. 26, 27) says of His disciples, certainly applies yet more to Himself. But yet, according to the constant teaching of the New Testament, the believer is not otherwise assured of God's grace, than by virtue of his communion with the once dead and now glorified Mediator, and the intervention of this Mediator remains, for this reason, as it were the channel through which the experience of this grace unceasingly flows forth to him.—Objects of this intercession are, according to the Scriptures, not all men, but definitely His own; all these, but also these only. He can only pray for those whom He can confess as His own, not for those whom He must deny.[6] For the world He can die; to the world He causes His Gospel to be proclaimed; the world He can intreat to be reconciled to God;[7] but Advocate can the High Priest be only for His people; the *Intercessio* presupposes that the reconciliation by the offering of atonement has been accomplished, not simply objectively, but also—in principle at least—subjectively. In so far the Lord could still always repeat His words in John xvii. 9; although, naturally, He desires nothing more ardently than that the world also should learn to believe in Him, through the belief and love of those who are the objects upon whom the benefits of this heavenly intercession rest.[8]—Its aim accordingly can only be to ensure their permanently remaining thus; and the Saviour's continued activity is necessary thereto, not on account of the incompleteness of His sacrifice, but because of the remaining weak-

[5] 1 John ii. 2. That which is confessed with regard to His people, *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxvi., and *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 33, is thus entirely in harmony with the teaching of the New Testament.

[6] Matt. x. 32, 33.

[7] 2 Cor. v. 20.

[8] John xvii. 20, 21.

ness of His people. In communion with the holy God, Christians, in themselves imperfect and constantly failing, can be preserved only by the High-priestly intervention of the righteous Christ, who constantly by His righteousness covers our unrighteousness, and as the perfected Head constantly represents the yet imperfect members before God.[9]

In this idea of *representation* does the conception of the Lord's intervention appear in reality to be described, an idea which, in harmony with the letter and spirit of Scripture, best commends itself to the Christian mind. If God, as we have already seen, is to have unbroken good-pleasure in men not yet perfectly sanctified, He must regard them not as to and in themselves, but in fellowship with Christ, in whom they are in principle made perfect.[10] Now the righteous Christ stands before the Divine contemplation as in an eternal present, unceasingly appearing before God on behalf of His people,[11] and representing before the face of God that which His people, notwithstanding all their momentary imperfections, in principle already are, and which they will one day perfectly manifest. It is unnecessary with some here to think of a supplication in words on behalf of His people; for, as it has been justly observed, "*intercessio ista fit magis in rebus, quam in verbis, per representationem mortis suæ in cœlis.*"[12] Enough that we recognise, in the doctrine under review, the expression of the truth that the High-priesthood of Christ has not simply once for all brought about a reconciliation, but still remains absolutely essential thereto, and permanently retains its value. If any one will term the teaching of the Gospel on this point "a sublime accommodation to human wants and weaknesses," let him do so, provided he does not forget to add that such an accommodation remains necessary, so long as the Christian continues to stumble, and in consequence thereof requires a constant renewal of the enjoyment of the forgiveness of sins once received.

4. By what has been said the *connection* is of itself determined, which exists between the earthly and the heavenly activity of Christ as the High Priest of Atonement. Every conception of His advocacy is to be rejected, by which anything even in the slightest degree is detracted from the truth and force of His word, "It is finished!" Now also is He upon the throne of His glory as well the slain Lamb, as the everlasting High Priest.[13] But with the completed *Expiatio* the continued *Intercessio* forms a compact Whole; and whereas His obedience on earth was one *actio passiva*, and at the same time one *passio activa*, His intervention in heaven merits the name of one *actio æterna*, an enduring pledge that He not simply *was* once for all the High Priest, but remains unceasingly the High Priest near at hand, for all those who come unto God by Him. The intercession is, in other words, the constant display and inner repetition of the sacrifice presented in the fulness of time, even as the old sacrificial ritual was formerly the shadowing forth thereof, and to this extent brings to light anew for the eye of faith the absolute *necessity* for that sacrifice. "There is expressed therein that the Father's good-pleasure rests upon man only in Christ and for Christ's

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[9] Compare Calvin, *Annot.*, ad John xvi. 26.
[10] Col. ii. 10.
[11] Heb. ix. 24.
[12] Turretine.
[13] Rev. v. 6; Heb. vi. 20.

sake; and that the Divine holiness can have no actual fellowship even with those already justified, except upon the ground of the power of reconciliation, ever renewing itself, and active on their behalf. There is perhaps nothing which could so strongly manifest the inner necessity for the atonement in regard to God Himself."[14] We need not therefore, with some, in a theosophic manner think of the actual presence in the sanctuary of heaven of the blood shed on Calvary.[15] Enough if it is recognised that —so far as its efficacy is concerned—it yet ever continues to speak better things than that of Abel.[16]

5. In this light the doctrine of the *Intercessio* becomes at the same time a fresh proof of the wholly unique dignity of the Lord. Of not one dead person does the Scripture teach that he prays for the living; only to living ones is the direction given to pray for others living,[17] but not even upon any angel is it enjoined to plead for sinful men. Thus Christ is presented, in this respect also, alone and peerless; by His act [of intercession] He does in heaven unceasingly that which—according to the erroneous teaching of the Romish Church—the celebrant of the mass daily accomplishes in a sacramental way; and with the most perfect justice may He be termed the end, not only of the law and of vision, but also of the Priesthood, which henceforth is continued on earth only in the spiritual priesthood of *all* His people.[18] But thus also the doctrine of atonement and reconciliation treated of in connection with this subject presents itself before our eye in a sublime and satisfying light. *The doctrine of atonement and reconciliation through the entire High-priestly activity of Christ, is for every sinner the inexhaustible source of humiliation, consolation, and sanctification; for the whole Church of the Lord, the condition of its preservation in life and of its higher unity; and for the whole of humanity, amid the changes and chances of this transitory life, an abiding necessity.* No word more powerfully convinces of sin, but also pours softer balm upon the wounded conscience, and exerts greater power for the new creation of the man and of humanity, than the word of atonement and reconciliation wrought by the heavenly High Priest once slain here upon earth. Where this doctrine is misinterpreted and forsaken, there the spiritual life droops; where, on the other hand, the uplifted cross is the banner of union, the Church of the Lord remains ever assured of the victory. However far also humanity may advance in knowledge and development, the Gospel of the death and glorification of Jesus remains indispensable for the salvation of sinners; for the twentieth and every following century also, so long as humanity has not discovered the secret either of no longer sinning, or of reconciling itself to God, or of being happy without Him. Until then Christ is the only and eternal High Priest, through whom humanity comes to God, and faith adopts in the Evangelical sense the words of the Christian father: "Christ prays for us as a priest; prays in us as our Head; is prayed to by us, as our God. Let us recognise, therefore, our voices in Him, and His voices in us." *Christus orat pro nobis ut sacerdos; orat in nobis ut caput nostrum; oratur a nobis, ut Deus noster. Agnoscamus ergo et in Illo voces nostras, et voces Ejus in nobis.*[19]

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[14] Thomasius.
[15] Zinzendorf, Bengel, and others.
[16] Heb. xii. 24.
[17] James v. 16.
[18] 1 Pet. ii. 9.
[19] Augustine.

Compare our *Christologie*, iii., pp. 357—360; THOMASIUS, *l. l.*, iii., p. 329, *sqq.*; SARTORIUS, *l. l.*, ii., p. 75, *sqq.*

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Further explanation and defence of the Scripture proof.—What is the sense of John xvi. 26, 27?—Is the continued intervention of Christ necessary only on the side of man, or also on that of God?—In what way does this truth suffer curtailment on the part of the Romish Church?—Is its presentation, and the estimation in which it is held, one and the same in all Protestant Churches?—What is apparent from this article as to the standpoint of Modern Theology?—May not this doctrine be abused to the encouragement of indifference and sin?—What must be especially regarded in connection with the preaching of the word of reconciliation in our time, in order that this preaching may also be a source of real blessing to this and later generations?

SECTION CXIII.—THE KINGLY OFFICE.

We call Christ our everlasting King, because, having entered through suffering into glory, He is exalted of the Father as Lord of the Kingdom of God; and, as such, by His word and Spirit rules the Church, renews the heart, and finally overcomes the world. Thus is the Kingly dominion of Christ the blessed means whereby the final aim alike of His prophetic and His priestly work is attained, and He, the Head, the Leader, and the Guide of His people, is made unto us of God, *Sanctification.*

1. As between the Prophetic and the High-Priestly office of Christ, so also between this and the Kingly office, there exists a direct and reciprocal *connection.* He Himself passed, not simply *after*, but because of and through, His sufferings to glory; the ground of His dominion is to be found in His obedience unto death, the death of the cross.[1] But also as concerns *us*, it is at once apparent that, however much we also owe to the Prophet and High Priest of the New Covenant, our perfect redemption is first accomplished by the Lord's activity as King of the Kingdom of God. What avails it that the understanding is enlightened, and the conscience pacified, unless also the heart be renewed, the will inclined in another direction, and thus the whole outward and inner life renewed after God's will and likeness? By no means do we overlook the extent to which the communion of faith with the Saviour who died contributes thereto; we have already directed attention to the moral aim of Jesus' sufferings and death (§ cxi. 7). But this communion itself, with its sanctifying power, would be inconceivable unless we knew Him who died at the same time as the Risen and Glorified One; and it is thus wholly in harmony with

[1] Luke xxiv. 26; Rom. xiv. 9; Phil. ii. 9.

the Gospel and with the nature of the case, when we bring our Sanctification and all that is connected therewith, not exclusively, but yet mainly, into connection with the Kingly office of the Redeemer. While referring the reader to that which has been already said (§ cvi.), concerning the fact of His exaltation to heaven, we must now learn to become more closely acquainted with the government of Christ itself, in connection with the Salvation which we owe to this part of His intervention.

2. The *existence* of a kingly office of the Lord, as well as of a prophetic and priestly one, cannot indeed in itself be open to any doubt. As King, the Redeemer was already expected and predicted by the poets and prophets of the Old Testament, and was moreover proclaimed by His Apostles to friend and foe.[2] His anointing with the Holy Ghost at baptism may be at the same time regarded as His Divine consecration to this dignity in the Kingdom of God. Even in the days of His humiliation He repeatedly called and showed Himself King; as King He was displayed even on the cross; and if His resurrection was the manifestation of the most glorious triumph, His ascension was the hour of His coronation. With the most perfect justice also has He been confessed as King by His faithful Church of all ages; and the Netherlands Reformed Church renders testimony with others to this her conviction in her doctrinal standards.[3]

3. With regard to the *nature* of this kingly dominion, it is to be observed that it must be ascribed to the Lord, not in a metaphorical, but a natural sense. Wrongly would any derive the opposite from the frequently misinterpreted words of John xviii. 36. This saying of the Lord indicates only, that—which no one doubts—this kingdom is not of worldly origin, but as the kingdom of truth establishes itself in the hearts of men; but by no means that it is not at all a kingdom, destined also visibly to come. The older and more modern Rationalistic conception, that Christ is a King only in something of the same sense in which the old Stoics explained that every wise man may be called a king; and that He rules only by the mighty influence which His word, example, and spirit yet exert after His departure from the earth, is by the Apostolic Gospel contradicted on almost every page. In speaking of the dominion of the Lord, we mean not simply the after-vibration from the shock which He has given to the moral world, but a continued personal activity in a province entrusted to Him above all others. "This Christocracy of the New Testament is the pneumatic plerosis of the limited and external Theocracy of the Old."[4] He who, like so many in our day, tells us that the Church has no longer any need of Christ after His departure from the earth; that there no longer exists any other personal bond between Him and His people, than that of His believers one with another; that, in a word, His power is only that of the truth, which lives on in the consciousness, forces on us instead of the Apostolic ideas, his own philosophic—but yet not on that account Christian-philosophic—ideas. If in the New Testament the dominion of Christ is pictured under dazzling images, it is far from following herefrom that

[2] See Ps. ii., cx.; Isa. ix. 6; Dan. vii. 13, 14; Matt. xxvi. 63, 64; Acts ii. 36; 1 Cor. xv. 25; and many other places.

[3] *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 31, 50; *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxvii.

[4] Plitt.

there is in this case nothing more than figurative language. If here and there we read of a reigning of His Church,[5] it is because she in her measure shares, and shall yet further share, in the dominion of her Head; but it proves least of all that this last consists in nothing else than the moral influence of every founder of a religion. Christ reigns not simply by means of, but personally over, His purchased Church, and this is destined to reign with Him. He it is from whom grace and truth continually flows forth to her,[6] who directs the way of her ministers,[7] who can be called upon in prayer,[8] who gives strength in all things and under all circumstances,[9] and, also, where He considers this necessary, personally manifests Himself to His disciples.[10] The truth is not merely the domain *in* which, but the powerful means *by* which, He rules; and His activity is to be regarded not simply as the working of a powerful after-influence, but as the exerting of a direct personal influence (ἐνέργεια). For him who sees in Christ nothing more than man, this idea may appear an insane one; for whoever regards Him in the light of His own word, it is simply a natural consequence of all that which has been revealed in connection with His person and work.

4. The *relation* which this government of Christ occupies to the Divine ordering of the world can be no other than this, that the Son of God, also as King of the Kingdom of God, sees all power *given* to Him of the Father, —so that it is the Father, who Himself, but *through the Son*, rules over all things.[11] We may thus, with reverence be it said, just as little speak of a division of administration between the two, as of an inactive repose, to which the Father may have banished Himself on the exaltation of the Son. The Divine plan of the world (§ lv.) is carried into effect by means of the government of Christ; its province does not stretch out side by side with that of the Providence of God; but the book of God's counsel is—according to the exalted Symbolics of Holy Scripture[12]—delivered into the hand of the glorified Christ. Nevertheless, in treating of the *extent* of the government of Christ, we must carefully distinguish between His dominion in the *wider* and in the *narrower* sense of the term; nor must the old distinction of the kingdom of Nature, of Grace, and of Glory, be altogether overlooked. According to Scripture, the Kingdom of Christ is in a certain sense—with the exception only of the Father Himself—absolutely unlimited in its extent.[13] This it must indeed be, because He who stands at the head is the Son, already as such the destined heir of all things,[14] who thus can in no case have received, as the reward of His perfect obedience, less than what He already by nature possessed. Thus then He in reality rules *over* all; but in order to render it, so far as it is destined thereto, a part of the Kingdom of God, *in* which He is recognised as Lord and King. It is ordinarily in this second narrower sense that He is throughout Holy Scripture presented as Head and Ruler. The Church—conceived of in the widest extent of the term—is, so to speak, the proper sphere of the kingly dominion of the Son. Its spiritual concerns are guided and advanced by Him;

[5] 2 Tim. ii. 12; Rev. v. 10.
[6] 1 Cor. i. 3.
[7] 1 Thess. iii. 11.
[8] 2 Cor. xii. 8.
[9] Phil. iv. 13.
[10] Acts xxiii. 11; Rev. i. 17.
[11] Matt. xxviii. 18; John xvii. 2; Heb. i. 3.
[12] Rev. v. 1—7.
[13] 1 Cor. xv. 27; Ephes. i. 20; 1 Pet. iii. 22.
[14] Heb. i. 2.

and, however closely these are connected with more natural affairs, we can only recognise a sound Christian tact in the fact that the Church, which without hesitation refers the former to the glorified Mediator (§ cxiv. 6), on the other hand prayerfully or thankfully commends the latter—*e.g.*, a favourable delivery in childbirth, a prosperous harvest, a dangerous illness, etc.—either to the Godhead in general, conceived of in the fulness of the Divine nature, or to the Father, in the name of the glorified Son; while, on the other hand, a sickly Pietism in such a case not seldom altogether loses sight of the distinction between the merely natural and the spiritual domain. Much more correctly has Irenæus already expressed himself: "*Super omnia quidem Pater est, et Ipse est caput Christi;*[15] *per omnia autem Verbum, et Ipse est caput Ecclesiæ; in omnibus Spiritus, et Ipse est aqua viva, quam præstat Dominus in se recte credentibus.*"[16] The universal character of Christ's government is wholly Soteriological in nature; in principle unlimited, it must in point of fact more and more become so, and only then will its destination be attained, when at last alike the kingdom of Nature and that of Grace is absorbed in the kingdom of Glory.

5. The kingly *activity* of the exalted Christ is thus, from the nature of the case, not directed primarily to the individual, but to the Church as such, which in the fullest sense of the word may be termed its theatre. Here He rules, although in the midst of His enemies,[17] and the history of the Church may be termed *one* continued manifestation of the government of Christ, although it only confirms, and that in a peculiar manner, what the word of the Apostles had already announced (compare § xc. 2). The whole of Soteriology, of Ecclesiology, and of Eschatology, is thus simply the continuation of the line which was begun in the doctrine of the kingly office of the Lord, which last consequently has for this reason less need of being largely treated of than, *e.g.*, that of His High-priestly activity. One side of the latter even, the *Intercessio* (§ cxii.), blends so intimately with the former, that in the presentation thereof it is hardly possible to make a distinction, just as accordingly the Gospel describes the Lord not simply as Priest or King, but definitely as Priest-king.[18] Under the dominion of this King, however, we find ourselves, only after we have been brought by the drawing of the Father out of the power of darkness, under His sway.[19]

6. The activity of the King of the Kingdom of God with regard to the *Church* must, it is evident, be a fourfold one.—He *gathers* the Church, first of all, out of the midst of the unbelieving world. It was no accident or arbitrary act, but the outpouring of the Holy Ghost through the intervention of the exalted Redeemer, by which it was at first founded. Everywhere, where it is established and extended, He, who is the Spirit,[20] creates

[15] 1 Cor. xi. 3.

[16] "*Above* all things is the Father, and He is the head of Christ; *through* all things is Christ (the Word), and He is the head of the Church; *in* all things is the Spirit, and He is the living water which the Lord gives to those who truly believe in Him."—IREN., *Adv. Hæres*, v. 18, 2.

[17] Ps. cx. 2.

[18] Heb. vi. 20.

[19] John vi. 44; Col. i. 12, 13. 2 Cor. iii. 17.

for Himself the form in which the new life is to present itself; from the inner vital impulse of the true Vine, the living branches shoot forth as it were of themselves.—He *rules* the Church, which is His mystical body, as the indwelling and controlling power of life, by the influence of His word and His Spirit. This He does, of course, not mechanically, but dynamically, as the head rules the body, by the life which from this centre diffuses itself through the whole organism, and penetrates each one of its parts, according to the want and capacity of each. This is the significance of the unwonted figure of Rev. ii. 1a. In this sense He is the *only* Lord of the Church, who tolerates and requires no other dominion under or beside Himself.[21] Hence it is that the Papal hierarchy may be regarded as the deepest corruption of the doctrine of the Kingship of Christ; and on the other hand liberty, equality, fraternity, in the noblest sense of these terms, as the fundamental law of His kingdom.—If it is continually assailed, He *protects* it, according to His own promise,[22] confirmed by the testimony of experience. That the Church of the Lord actually has a history, and stands unto this day, is the blessing of the government of Christ.—And equally is it by Him assured of its eternal future. He *perfects* it finally, as well by continuing inwardly to purify it,[23] as by outwardly causing it to triumph at last even over the most powerful opposition.[24]

7. As to the Church in general, so does the Lord continually stand towards *each one* of His people in the most direct relation. He Himself has promised this,[25] and the experience of every believer affords confirmation to the fact that this promise is more than an empty sound. Here, where Soteriology and Pneumatology almost insensibly blend in one, there must be of course much that is obscure. But do we not experience the warmth and the power of the sun, even although we are able only imperfectly to describe its relation to each part of the earth? and is the electric spark, which reaches us through a multitude of conducting wires, on that account not directly derived from the well-known instrument? Not otherwise, in all that Christ works by His word and Spirit, is it nevertheless Himself who *does* it.[26] He is the Prince, the true Author of life in the spiritual domain,[27] who has not only once brought it in, but in whom it constantly has its source, and from whom it unceasingly flows forth. Thus He Himself lives, not in the memory, but in the heart, in a spiritual manner, doubtless, but yet personally, in each one of His people;[28] and as He has life of the Father, so do His people live—by virtue of the innermost unity of spirit—not simply *in* and *with*, but *by* Him;[29] so that he who inwardly has not the Son, lacks also the true life.[30] He who by faith has the Son, bears in himself a life, heavenly in origin, spiritual in nature, holy in tendency, triumphant in power. He stands, in a word, continually in communion with the Lord; naturally, no communion of a sensuous nature, such as is dreamt of by the fanatic; no pantheistic fusion, in which at last the boundaries between the Divine and the human disappear; but an inner

[21] Matt. xxiii. 8; 1 Pet. v. 4.
[22] Matt. xvi. 18.
[23] Ephes. v. 25—27.
[24] Rev. xix. 11—16.
[25] John xiv. 23.
[26] John xiv. 13, 21.
[27] ἀρχηγὸς τῆς ζωῆς, Acts iii. 15.
[28] Gal. ii. 20.
[29] John vi. 57.
[30] 1 John v. 12.

relation of life perfectly healthful, from its nature reciprocal, just as the branch not only clings firmly to the vine, but also the vine ceaselessly diffuses its vital sap within the branch, and in consequence thereof the "no longer I, but Christ liveth in me," is the expression, imperfect, indeed, but yet not misleading, of the most glorious reality.

8. That which the King of the Kingdom of God effects in His Church in general, and in connection with each one of its members in particular, has no other object than in such wise to overcome the *World* that it becomes in its totality a province of His kingdom. In this sense we may boldly assert that the Christocracy has not simply an individual ethical, but also a universal cosmical [world-embracing] significance.—The word of the kingdom already *has* in many respects renewed the form of the moral world. As the stone cast into the water describes ever wider circles, so has Christ caused the individual and the household, art and science, society and the state, to experience the mighty influence of His word and Spirit.—He still *continues* to extend His empire; even the increasing hatred of the world against the Gospel is the proof that its power is yet by no means exhausted: so much hatred and scorn is not wasted on a corpse. It is still ever afresh apparent that He came into the world for judgment,[31] but He judges only in order that He might save.—No doubt, moreover, but the *future* belongs to Him as to no one else.[32] Because it is as impossible that man should permanently live without the communion of God, as that a higher revelation and atonement should ever be brought in, than that which we owe to this Christ. Thus by degrees the whole moral world is penetrated by His quickening influence, and, considering the intimate connection between Spirit and Nature, we cannot but expect that this last also shall become in its measure renewed and glorified, in consequence of His constantly continued coming, "whereby in ever higher development of His fulness, He renders Himself the centre of the world, which shall be prepared and transformed to a living organically increasing temple of Christ."[33]

9. Of an *end*, in the ordinary sense of the word, to the Kingly dominion of the exalted Redeemer, we cannot accordingly speak; on the contrary, we receive the most positive promise and assurance of its endless duration.[34] Only in apparent contradiction herewith is that which Paul, in a memorable place,[35] gives us to expect with regard to the completion of the kingdom of Christ. When even the last enemy is for ever brought to nought, then is also the final aim of His government attained, and the kingdom of Christ can, and of necessity must, be absorbed in the endlessly blessed kingdom of God. As Son of God, the Lord was already subject to the Father, apart from whom He is and can do nothing;[36] but now He becomes so also as King, inasmuch, namely, as He ceases to be the mediate cause of the execution of God's counsel, which now in its totality is accomplished. Upon that prospect our eyes cannot possibly gaze without becoming dazzled; but that the King of regenerate humanity shall, even *after* that great turning-point, be eternally resplendent, as the Firstborn

[31] John ix. 39.
[32] Isa. liii. 10b.
[33] Martensen.
[34] Dan. vii. 13, 14; Luke i. 33; Heb. xii. 28.
[35] 1 Cor. xv. 25—28.
[36] John v. 19, 20.

among many brethren, we might have expected, though we had not been even indirectly assured thereof by the same Apostle.[37]

10. The surest *warrant* that this end, so fraught with glory to God, shall certainly be attained by means of the government of Christ, is found in the peculiar character of the Lord as Head, Leader, and Guide of His people. As *Head* of the Church,[38] is He not simply her Lord and Ruler, but also her source of life and point of union, and *can* thus operate with quickening and with sanctifying power on all who stand in communion with Him by faith.—As *Leader* of His people, He presents to them in His whole personality the highest ideal of moral perfection, to which also His first witnesses repeatedly direct us ;[39] and where love to Him naturally calls forth the courage and the power to follow Him, there *must* indeed arise a new spirit, of which nothing less than likeness to Christ is the final purport, because His Spirit renews us after His image.[40]—And that He really *will* bring His people to nothing less than this, is evident to us, even from the fact that He is not simply the Finisher, but also the *Supreme Guide* in the path of faith,[41] who not only begins, but also assuredly completes, the good work. Thus He is and remains the Shepherd and Bishop of all the souls of His people ;[42] but the final end to which He leads them, what other should it be than that sanctification which everywhere in the Gospel is presented as the will and requirement of God, κατ' ἐξοχήν ?[43]

11. Where Christ has thus been made to us of God Sanctification, *there* is prepared for us in and through Him, a *Saving Benefit*, which can be conferred upon us only after Wisdom and Righteousness, but which, not less than these, merits the highest appreciation. For certainly not only the guilt, but above all the dominion of sin, is the source of the deepest misery. Unto communion with the spotlessly Holy One are we destined and redeemed, but without sanctification this communion is altogether inconceivable ; and only where sanctification, at least in principle, is present, can we speak with any justice of complete redemption. But thus at length is attained, through the Kingly office of Christ, the final aim not only of His Prophetic and High-priestly activity, but even that of Creation and Providence ; since the full realisation of the Divine plan of the world (§ lv.) ensures at the same time the triumph of the moral order of the world. The unbelieving rejection of the kingly office of Christ must for this reason inflict incalculable loss, not only on the good cause of faith, but also on that of morality, and in the long run exert a fatal influence upon the spiritual life of the Church ; for what is a Christianity without a continued spiritual communion of life with the glorified Christ, in which at the same time His members take and receive out of His fulness? The reverent acknowledgment of this truth, on the other hand, is admirably calculated to awaken, in connection with a truly Christian sanctification, the sincere joy of faith and the life of hope.

Compare J. HERINGA, *Verhand. over de Koninkl. waardigh. van J. C.* (Hague Soc., 1797); L. G. PAREAU, *De leer der SS. des N. V. omtrent Christus' voortdurende werk-*

[37] Rom. viii. 29 ; Phil. iii. 21.
[38] Col. i. 18.
[39] Phil. ii. 5 ; 1 Pet. ii. 21 ; 1 John ii. 6.
[40] 2 Cor. iii. 18.
[41] Heb. xii. 2.
[42] 1 Pet. ii. 25.
[43] Compare Matt. v. 8 ; 1 Thess. iv. 3 ; Heb. xii. 14.

zaamh., etc., *Waarh. in Liefde* (1853); A. NEANDER, *Denkwürdigk. aus der Geschichte des Christenth. und des Christl. Lebens*, 3rd edn. (1845). On the imitation of Christ, especially MARTENSEN, *Ethik* (1871), p. 410, *sqq.* See also, on this whole section, our *Christologie*, iii., pp. 329—439; and the literature appended to § cvi.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

On what grounds has the Kingly office of the Lord been opposed by the earlier and later Rationalism? and what can be adduced against it?—In what manner has this truth been misused by the Mysticism of earlier and later times? and how is this misuse to be obviated?—What is the distinction between the continued activity of the exalted Redeemer, and that of the Holy Ghost?—How are we properly to conceive of the life of Christ in His people and in the Church?—What is the sense of Ephes. v. 25—27?—How is 1 Cor. xv. 25—28 to be explained, and harmonised with Luke i. 33?—How do you understand Heb. xii. 1, 2?—Wherein does the true following of Jesus consist? to what does it impel? what alone puts us in a position to follow Him?—What impression must the confession of the Kingly dignity of the Lord make upon His disciples?—Man-worship and the fear of man viewed in the light of this truth.

SECTION CXIV.—THE HIGHER UNITY.

As intermediate cause of enlightenment, pardon, and new creation for a sinful world, is Christ Jesus—the Prophet, Priest, and King of the New Covenant—made unto us of God *Redemption* in all the force of the word. In and through Him are not only the consequences of the disobedience of the first Adam thoroughly redressed, but there stands in reality before God a new humanity, in principle justified, sanctified, and glorified. Thus He manifestly is and remains the only, but also all-sufficient Mediator between God and men, the true King of the Kingdom of God; in this relation also the worthy object of the adoring homage of His people.

1. If through the intervention of Christ the understanding, the conscience, and the will of the sinner has been delivered, it cannot then be difficult to discover the higher unity of all that has been said. The word Redemption —ἀπολύτρωσις—is as it were the comprehending in one of all the three preceding ones, the crown of the whole edifice. It points us to Christ as the Saviour of the *whole* man and of humanity, so far as humanity enters into union with Him; and thus affords us an opportunity of measuring, so far as possible in its whole compass, the salvation wrought in Him.

2. The *idea* of Redemption, earlier indicated only in general terms (§ lxxxi. 7), begins, after all that has been said, now to present itself in clearer outline. The word ἀπολύτρωσις itself bears a truly Pauline character; it is found only a comparatively few times in the Epistles of this Apostle, as in that to the Hebrews and the Gospel of Luke. It indicates in general

liberation, deliverance;[1] but as used in the order of thought of Paul, it indicates more definitely redemption, which takes place by means of a ransom, λύτρον. Thus it naturally carries us back to the utterance of the Lord (Matt. xx. 28) as the ground in which this part of the Apostolic usage has its root. A partial ἀπολύτρωσις is never spoken of in the Gospel; on the contrary, it belongs to the idea of redemption that it should be, at least in principle, as absolute as possible. The notion conveyed by the word redemption is thus essentially one with that of the salvation in Christ, conceived of in its full extent. It presupposes a condition of moral bondage under a strange, fatal power, of which an end is for ever made by the Redeemer.[2] Potentially the redemption here referred to consists in the forgiveness of trespasses,[3] in which it is already given to the Christian here. But actually it is first completed on the day of the Parousia, on which the last bond is loosed from the sighing creature, and is in so far described as yet future.[4] The notion of redemption, conceived in the spirit of the New Testament, thus displays at the same time a juridical, ethical, and physical side; in other words, he who is made partaker of redemption is *ipso facto* delivered from the punishment, from the dominion, and from the consequences of his sins, in the present and the future life. In its consequences it becomes thus also a redemption from the power of the world and the devil, yea—realised on an ever greater scale—finally a deliverance and glorification of nature now still bound,[5] while this physical redemption has its basis in the ethical, just as the ethical in the juridical. The foundation of all is the unmerited love of God—χάρις—who on account thereof is called the Saviour—σωτήρ—of all men, especially of the believers.[6]

3. It is already evident that there is an essential distinction between that which is ordinarily called Emancipation and Redemption. While by the former the man is delivered from an external bond which oppressed him, and in consequence thereof is brought into an unfettered condition, the latter begins in the domain of the sinner's inner life, and thence extends its influence to the outward life also, and to the future state.—It is equally clear that the notion of Redemption embraces far more than that of the Atonement. The latter is simply an important part of the inestimable whole; Christ is the Reconciler by His sacrifice, Redeemer by His whole earthly and heavenly activity. Not magically or mechanically, but dynamically, does He bring about our redemption; by the manifestation of the truth, by the bringing home to us of the atonement, and by the restoration of the true life. Yea, He does not simply confer, He Himself *is* the redemption of the individual and of the race; because in Him the saving love of God, the principle of all true life, was personally manifested and appeared.

4. That Christ is truly a Redeemer in this sense, is not simply the verdict of the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament, but the testimony of the life-experience of millions out of all ages and times; it becomes more apparent at every step, and its demonstration will one day at the end be

[1] Heb. xi. 35.
[2] λυτρωτής, Acts vii. 35.
[3] Ephes. i. 7; Col. i. 14.
[4] Rom. viii. 23; Ephes. i. 14.
[5] Rom. viii. 19—23.
[6] 1 Tim. iv. 10.

raised to the highest degree of clearness. For this reason every truly Christian view of life, with all the relative justice of Pessimism in reference to the moral domain, can as to its ultimate expectations never be anything else than an Optimistic one. But thus there falls, in connection with this article, a surprising light upon the Apostolic conception of the Lord as the second *Adam*,[7] which, far indeed from being an individual half-Jewish Theologoumenon, contains on the contrary the just indication of the central place which He occupies in the history of fallen humanity.[8] While the first Adam was the root of the sickly stem, He was as the fresh layer grafted thereupon by the heavenly Gardener, that therefrom new life might proceed into all that comes into spiritual contact with Him. As it has been very justly remarked by one of the deepest thinkers of our age, "the natural humanity certainly cannot by means of its own development attain its moral end. This, however, becomes possible to it by an act of God, whereby it has been redeemed. This redeeming act must at the same time be regarded as a creative one; and it is so by reason of the fact that God has creatively given a new Beginner of the human race, a second Adam, to appear in the old natural humanity;" [9] not, however, as though that which originally took place and was given wholly outside of ourselves, now also should further attain its salutary end also outside of us. As though the Apostle himself were afraid the sacred subject would be conceived of by some in too external and mechanical a manner, he expressly points to the Lord's *obedience*[10] as the source of all the salvation, which thus comes to us not otherwise than by a moral act, and becomes personally appropriated by us only through the obedience of faith,[11]—in other words, again in a moral way.

5. He who prepares so great salvation necessarily stands in a relation, both to God and to humanity, which can scarcely be better indicated than by the name of *Mediator*—μεσίτης—again a truly Pauline name, to be found only in his epistles, and in that to the Hebrews.[12] By a mediator we understand in general a middle person, who intervenes as a reconciler between two parties at variance, and by his intervention brings them together again. Thus was Moses, in Philo also, the Mediator of the Old Covenant, who constantly stood between God and the nation;[13] and in Holy Scripture the possibility of the mediating intervention also of other sacred persons on behalf of the guilty is presupposed.[14] Christ however is, according to the Gospel and from the nature of the case, the only Mediator of reconciliation between God and man, and in so far also the Surety (guarantee) of the Covenant to which His mediation leads;[15] so that no other is to be placed beside Him, and no other is to be expected after Him.[16] This His

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[7] Rom. v. 12—21; 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22.
[8] Compare § lxxv. ii. 1.
[9] Rothe.
[10] Rom. v. 19.
[11] Rom. xvi. 26.
[12] 1 Tim. ii. 5; Gal. iii. 20; Heb. ix. 15.
[13] Deut. v. 5.
[14] Gen. xviii. 22; Exod. xxxii. 32; Num. xvi. 46—48; Job xxxiii. 23 and following verses.
[15] Heb. vii. 22.
[16] Compare *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxvi

character as Mediator is the foundation of His work as Redeemer, and no one else displays this character but He. He represents God among men, and again represents humanity before the presence of God. Thus He unites in His person that which had been separated by sin; and as He perfectly satisfies all the spiritual needs of the individual man, so is He able and willing to satisfy—and will in reality perfectly satisfy—those of *all* who by Him are reconciled to God.

6. Thus is Christ truly *all*, by means of and in all His people;[17] and also for the heathen world, which from no fault of its own has lacked the knowledge of His Gospel, there is no other salvation than in Him.[18] Him alone, after all this, we term the true *King* of the Kingdom of God, because He has not only redeemed a countless number of individuals, but has founded, and is founding, an entirely new communion between God and man, as between His people one with another. "By this fellowship of life, entered into in Christ with sinful humanity, the Kingdom of God is again in principle restored."[19] He has not simply awakened a new consciousness of God in the world, but implanted a new life, out of which a new consciousness has been born. Nowhere on earth is the kingdom of God truly set up among men, except in and through Him. On a comparative glance at all the Theocratical forms which have existed or yet exist here below, we see the ideal of a true restored communion between God and men realised only in His dearly purchased Church. He is not simply a king, but the eternal King of the new humanity, under whose sway it slowly but surely ripens for its high destiny.

7. What *homage* He merits as such is a question in principle already answered by what has been said. If we take counsel of the word and example of His first confessors, there is no doubt whether it is lawful and obligatory to render to our Lord, as the glorified King of the Kingdom of God, the homage of our *adoration*. Compare Luke xxiv. 52; Acts i. 24; vii. 59; Rom. x. 13; 2 Cor. xii. 8; 2 Tim. iv. 18; 2 Pet. iii. 18. According to Jesus' own word and bearing, He can lay just claim thereto;[20] and, through all ages of the Christian Church, we accordingly see the prayer and song of the assembly consecrated—not less than to the Father—to the glorified Son. From the modern Naturalistic point of view, the invocation of the exalted Son is of course as absurd as that of Mary, or the saints beside her; but it will be easily comprehended that we listen not without a little caution to the conscientious warning, proceeding from this side, against an undue adoration of Christ (Christolatry). Excessive Christolatry takes place only where the adoration of the exalted Lord is substituted for and supersedes that of the Father; it being forgotten that, according to sound doctrine, every act by which the Son is extolled must end in the glorification of the Father.[21] Instances of such one-sidedness are to be found, *e.g.*, here and there in the liturgy and hymnology of the Moravians; and equally little is it in the spirit of the Gospel, when the Lutheran

[17] Col. iii. 11.
[18] Acts iv 12; 1 Pet. iii. 19; compare §§ lxxxii. 4, civ. 6.
[19] Schoeberlein.
[20] John v. 23; xiv. 1; xx. 28, 29.
[21] Phil. ii. 10, 11; Rev. v. 13, 14.

Church in some places prescribes as the form of asking a daily blessing at table an invocation of the exalted Lord. As opposed to this practice, the inscription which is read at the foot of Dannecker's painting of the Christ, "By Me to the Father," deserves to be called to mind. It may be mentioned not simply as a peculiarity, but even as a merit, of the liturgical—*i.e.*, officially prescribed—public prayer of the Reformed Church, that, with the full recognition of the Godhead of the Son, it as a rule addresses its petitions only to God the Father, *in the name of* the Mediator; and we cannot feel surprised that renowned Reformed Theologians, in their zeal against the Ubiquitarians, were opposed to the adoration of the *God-man.*[22] They were right in the assertion that he who adores the human nature of the Lord as such incurs the charge of idolatry. But, on the other hand, it must by no means be overlooked, that precisely in the frame of admiring and adoring gratitude, which is called forth by the contemplation of the person and work of Christ, the dogmatic distinction between the two natures recedes often into the background; and that the opposition in the case of an honour which we may indeed render to the Son of God, but not to the exalted God-man, is least of all likely to present itself in the Christian consciousness, because this cannot for a single moment forget that this God-*man* is also *very* God, and conversely, that this Son of God is at the same time the exalted King of the Kingdom of God. He who renders the homage of adoration to Christ, adores not the human nature of Christ in itself, but the Exalted One in whom the Divine is personally united with the human nature. To this his heart impels him, and there is nothing in the letter or spirit of the Gospel which forbids him such utterance of his grateful feeling. If indeed—what has been said, but, in our estimation at least, by no means yet proved—a purely Reformed point of view admits no liberty for such a look of homage towards the glorified Mediator, then it is high time to remember that we are in the first place Christians; in the second, Protestant; and only in the third place, Reformed Christians, whose doctrine and practice on this point, according to Article vii. of the Netherlands Confession itself, would require Scriptural revision. The anti-Lutheran reserve of the Reformed Church in its Liturgy need not at any rate serve as a model, where it concerns the thankful and free outpouring of the personal and common feelings of the subjects of the Kingdom of God towards their King. We cannot possibly conceive that He would repeat the word addressed to the seer of Patmos by the angel who reproved him (Rev. xxii. 8, 9). On the contrary, it is certainly according to His mind, when—at the end of the objective Soteriology—we, as on bended knee, kindle to Him the incense of adoration, which also the inhabitants of heaven present to Him,[23] and *to the glory of God the Father*, take upon our lips the Apostolic doxology to the Son: *ᾧ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν.*[24]

Compare J. W. Bok, *Disq. exhib. Pauli Ap. doctrinam de τῇ ἀπολύτρωσει* (1856). On Rom. v. 12—21, the monograph of A. Dietsch, *Adam und Christus* (1871). On the

[22] See the instances in Scholten, *l. l.*, ii., p. 358.
[23] Rev. v. 8.
[24] 2 Tim. iv. 18.

Optimistic and the Pessimistic mode of viewing the world, in connection with the doctrine of Redemption, the exceedingly important remarks of H. MARTENSEN, *Chr. Ethik* (1871), i., pp. 230—270. On the invocation of Christ, the programma of F. LUECKE, *De invocatione J. C.*, i. (1843); H. G. HASSE, *l. l.*, p. 200; SCHOLTEN, *Leer der Herv. Kerk.*, ii. (1861), p. 357, *sqq.* See also our *Christologie*, iii., pp. 225, *sqq.*

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Illustration of the Biblical idea of the Ἀπολύτρωσις from classical usage.—Comparison of the Pauline conception with places in which an ἀγοράζειν, ἐξαγοράζειν, etc., through the intervention of Christ is spoken of.—The Evangelical doctrine of Atonement compared with that of Rationalism on the one hand, and of Mysticism on the other.—Christian Optimism.—The nature and lawfulness of Christolatry.—Further discussion of the exegetical proof.—The practice of the Reformed and the Lutheran Churches on this point, tested by the Gospel of the Scriptures.—Can the homage rendered to the King of the Kingdom of God ever proceed too far?—Sense and fitness of the Apostle's saying, 2 Cor. ix. 15.

CHAPTER V.

THE WAY OF SALVATION, OR THE CONSTITUTION OF THE KINGDOM.

(SUBJECTIVE SOTERIOLOGY.)

SECTION CXV.—TRANSITION AND SURVEY.

THE Salvation, prepared for the world in Christ, can only become our personal property, when we follow the Way of Salvation, indicated by the Gospel. With regard to this, we must ask, on the one hand, what is thereby required from the sinner; on the other, how he is enabled to satisfy this demand. For this reason special attention must be given to the Demands of the Gospel, and to the Work of Grace, in connection with the freedom of man.

1. There exists a close *connection* between objective Soteriology and the subjective Soteriology, which we are now to treat. Thus much may at once be laid down as the result of the first mentioned, that in Christ a way of salvation is opened for all without distinction. On the part of God and Christ everything is given and promised which is necessary to life and godliness.[1] God "will have all men to be saved,"[2] and "has no pleasure in the death of the sinner."[3] But certain as this is, it is also seen that not every one is saved. To the one Christ is for the fall, to another for the rising again.[4] He plainly presupposes the tremendous possibility of a fruitless calling and knocking,[5] and His Apostles, in contrast with the To-day of grace, speak of an irreparable Too late.[6] The good-natured hope, that in every case everything is right for everybody, finds in the Sacred Writers

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[1] 2 Pet. i. 3.
[2] 1 Tim. ii. 4.
[3] Ezek. xxxiii. 11.
[4] Luke ii. 34; 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.
[5] Luke xiii. 25—27.
[6] 2 Cor. vi. 2; 2 Thess. i. 9.

far more contradiction than support; and the latitudinarian decree of a crowned unbeliever of a preceding century (Frederic the Great), that in his states every one might be saved in his own way (*à sa façon*), finds no place in the constitution of the kingdom of heaven. It is not, that every one is saved in his own way, but all are so by *one* way pre-ordained of God. Many are the paths of destruction; one only is the narrow path leading to life. In what direction runs this path? Subjective Soteriology is intended to give a satisfactory reply to this question.

2. The *subject-matter* of that part of Christian doctrine under review is already defined in principle by what has been just said. Subjective Soteriology makes us acquainted with the peculiar conditions under which it is alone possible for the sinner to share in the salvation of Christ. Naturally we speak here merely of condition (conditio *sine quâ non*) in the ethical, and not in the juridical meaning of the word. Salvation in Christ is not a purchase, whereby heaven becomes our property at the price of faith and repentance, but a gift of free grace.[7] Yet this grace does not annihilate conscious self-determination on the part of man; it does not work mechanically or magically; on the contrary, only by the way of the moral path can it become our property. God first draws nigh in Christ to us,—yet even this is in vain, if we do not draw nigh to Him.[8] Redemption is an act of God; yet, if it is not to be without effect for us, it must be answered by an act on our side. What act? God only, who gives the redemption, has the right to define the way by which the sinner will become personally a partaker of that redemption. To the question, what He demands thereto, only the Gospel gives a clear and infallible reply. Thus, before all other things, *the demand of the Gospel* must here be expressly elucidated and sufficiently established.

Yet here, before we proceed, a consideration arises,—we speak of the *demand* of the Gospel; is then the Gospel another law? and does the New Testament differ only from the Old in this, that the work of faith is substituted for all other works? It seems so; yet only so long as we overlook the fact that God Himself produces in the sinner that which He demands, and that the promise of the covenant,[9] made in very ancient times, is fulfilled in the fulness of the time. But then a second question arises: We must know not only what sinful man has to do, but what God on His part does, to lead man into the way of life. Most justly, therefore, have many earlier theologians given a separate place, next to the investigation as to the order of salvation (*Ordo, seu Œconomia salutis*) to that as to the operation of the Holy Spirit (*Operationes gratiæ*). The first includes everything which is demanded on our part; the other investigates the mode in which these demands are realised in us. It is true, this contrast is not absolute, but relative; indeed, God works as little without man as man can accomplish anything without God. And yet accurate distinction between the two is here as necessary, as it is possible; and after the demand of the Gospel the *work of grace* must be investigated as closely as possible.

3. The division of the investigation which awaits us now is justified by what we have said, and it is unnecessary to enter here into a description or

[7] Rom. iii. 24. [8] James iv. 8. [9] Jer. xxxi. 31—34.

estimation of the various ways in which, especially after the Reformation, the doctrine of the Order of Salvation was regarded and treated. But it certainly is not superfluous to point out again the deep *import* of the question which now comes before us—for every sinner, for every Theologian and Preacher of the Gospel, most specially at the present time. The discussion which is now to claim our attention belongs less to the Christian Confession of the Father and the Son, than to that of the Holy Ghost, whose nature and essence we have already treated (§ liv.), but whose operations we must now consider, as these lead us again in their turn to personal communion of life with the Son and the Father. We must here be on our guard, on the one hand, against the error of those who would dissolve the whole of Christology into Pneumatology, because they will not hear of a continual and personal operation of the glorified Christ (§ cxiii. 3); on the other hand, against the danger of remaining at the first, without allowing its full right to the second. An ignoring of the necessity, or a misconception of the nature, of the operation of the Holy Ghost, is a defect in not a few who think and speak in an orthodox manner about the person of the Lord. And yet the words of the Apostle in 1 Cor. xii. 3, are no less true than those in 1 Cor. i. 30, which we lately learned to understand in all their force. Thus he who would consider and treat subjective Soteriology with less interest than objective, would only show that he values indeed the sweetness, but not the full earnestness, of the Gospel.

Compare the Art. *Heilsordnung*, by C. WEISZACKER, in Herzog's *Real-Encyl.*, v., p. 684, *sqq.*, and also the handbooks of the principal Dogmatists on this subject; as well as J. J. VAN OOSTERZEE, *The Theology of the New Testament* (Eng. trans.), §§ xv., xx., xl.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Meaning and just claim of the question in Acts xvi. 30.—Does the Gospel really teach that the misery of the sinner is only his own fault?—How can this doctrine be brought into unison with that of a gracious election to eternal life?—Survey of the manner in which the doctrine of the Way of Salvation has been treated up to the present time in the Christian Church.—Comparison of the treatment of the *Œconomia salutis* in Reformed, Lutheran, and Romish Dogmatics.—What does St. Paul really teach in 1 Cor. xii. 3?—Is the investigation which awaits us equally important in the estimation of everybody?

FIRST DIVISION.

THE DEMANDS OF THE GOSPEL.

SECTION CXVI.—THE LONGING FOR DELIVERANCE.

IF the Gospel of Grace is not to be offered without effect to the sinner, it must find in his inner man a point of adherence. This point of adherence can be nothing else than the personal longing for Deliverance, which reveals itself in various ways, but does not rest, until it finds perfect satisfaction through and in Christ.

1. The first thing which the Gospel not merely desires, but demands, in him who will personally become partaker of the blessing of Redemption, is a living feeling of need, a definite desire for the subjective possession of that which is objectively given in Christ. Most significant in this respect are the beatitudes in Matt. v. 3—6; equally so the invitations of the Gospel, especially to the man desirous of salvation.[1] The state of mind we indicate is less a claim even than an inclination and a capacity, which still precedes the dawn of faith and repentance, and must be found in every one in whom the last is not to re-echo entirely in vain. As a foundation and starting-point, however, for what is to follow, it deserves a moment's attention at our hands.

2. To conceive the *nature* of the desire here denoted, we must go back in thought to what has been already said concerning the possibility of deliverance.[2] The sinner, though past help in himself, is still capable of help, because all traces of man have not entirely perished in him. Consequently there reigns in the sinful heart a feeling of discord, sprung from the sense of disharmony between his needs and condition. Now, however, is it, anthropologically considered, as possible to choke this feeling, as to retain it alive and let it speak where it has been once aroused. In the first case, all capacity, as well for really religious, as also and specially for true Christian life is lost, and it is then morally impossible for the sinner to enter into communion with Christ. In the other case, on the contrary, there is an internal point of connection for the life-rope which is stretched to us from above; a concealed foundation, on which a further building may be raised. On this account must the great question, "*Wilt* thou be made whole?" precede all other questions which may be put to the man, sick through sin. Only where the "wretched man that *I* am!" is felt in the depth of a crushed

[1] Isa. lv. 1; 1 John vii. 37.

[2] Section lxxx.

heart, is it also psychologically possible that the mouth should afterwards repeat from the heart the song of deliverance.

3. The *reasons* for this demand are partly of a logical, partly of an historical, partly of an empirical nature.—The Gospel announces itself as the complete fulfilment of a very definite need, and before all else it must demand that that need be not concealed, but really felt and recognised. Of what use is food to the satiated, medicine to the healthy, pardon to him who has no fear of condemnation? A work of art cannot be appreciated by one who has no knowledge of art: still less a philosophic system by the confused, unscientific brain; and, least of all, the Gospel of Redemption, by him who does not yet sigh under his sins. Say not that this personal feeling of need is found in every one; experience proves the contrary. The sigh for happiness is heard in all, but not yet on this account the want of deliverance from everything which stands in the way of this happiness; in many a transient inclination towards freedom is often roused, but this is by no means as yet an irresistible longing.—The sacred history shows how the Lord and His Apostles did their utmost to arouse that slumbering desire of the soul, and that only where the ground was thus prepared could the seed of the kingdom be sown with the wished-for result. Hence the publicans accepted what was rejected by the Pharisees, and the question of penitence was heard not from the hostile mockers, but from the earnest, deeply touched multitude, on the day of Pentecost.[3]—Aye, even now experience shows that all attempts to lead sinners to faith and repentance are absolutely fruitless where this inner predisposition is entirely wanting. He only who is of the truth hears and understands the voice of the Lord,[4] and not the blind, who say, "We see," but they only who cry, "Have mercy on us," are healed of their spiritual blindness.[5]

4. In regard to the *extent* of this claim, the feeling which we here indicate certainly reveals itself in very different forms. We have already seen that deliverance finds its point of application alternately in understanding, conscience, and will; and we know that the same side of spiritual life does not come out with equal prominence in all. Thus there will be felt first and in the highest degree in one a burning desire for truth; in another, a deep longing after peace; in a third, again, an eager desire to be freed from the power of sin. And yet the same sense will reveal itself in all these forms, viz., that we cannot save ourselves, but need Christ in our heart as the satisfier of our wants. It is not indeed sufficient that this feeling be present without operation, but that it be living and watchful; that it make us ask, with a holy zeal, for light and life from God; that it will not let itself be choked, but drives us to Him who is the Bread for our inner spiritual hunger. Not the general recognition of sin, but the personal sense of our own sinfulness; not a vague feeling of insufficiency, but a right knowledge of our own guilt and misery; this, indeed, is not the one thing, but the first thing necessary, if the great step is to be made which leads from doubt to faith, and from faith to sight.

5. The great *importance* of this demand must by no means be overlooked. Already as being just and unchangeable, it deserves our notice, but more

[3] Acts ii. 37. [4] John viii. 47; xviii. 37. [5] John ix. 39—41.

still, because of its close connection with the task which Christian Dogmatics and Apologetics must fulfil. Where the former does not accept this postulate, Subjective Soteriology entirely loses its psychological character; where the latter overlooks this truth, it runs the risk of toiling in vain. Belief in the truth and divinity of the Gospel cannot be justified before every tribunal, but it can be recommended to the intellect, heart, and conscience with the desired result where there really exists within the material to be kindled by the heavenly spark of truth. "Men have ceased to attribute reality only to that which can be demonstrated" (Twesten), but in this domain specially there can be no mention of effective Apology and appreciation of the truth so long as we have every reason to tremble at the question of the Lord, "How can ye believe?"[6] Only in the heart guileless and well inclined as that of Nathanael will the "Come and see" in His name re-echo with effect.

Compare J. J. VAN OOSTERZEE, *Jaarb.*, v. (1845), p. 55, *sqq.*; A. THOLUCK, *Die wahre Weihe des Zweiflers*, specially the first appendix, as well as the beautiful discourse of A. MONOD, *Qui a soif*, in his sermons, iii., 1. (1859), p. 287, *sqq.*

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

The meaning of John vii. 17.—Elucidation of what has been said from the history of the first century of Christianity.—How is it, that so many in whom a capacity for and a need of the Gospel is in no way wanting, do nevertheless in our days turn away from Christianity?

SECTION CXVII.—SAVING FAITH.

The feeling of a need of Redemption is not satisfied, except where Faith personally appropriates to itself the salvation, to be obtained by all in Christ. The demand of such a faith is as unlimited, as it is reasonable, and most worthy of God; and the connection between faith on one side, and salvation on the other, is so indissoluble, that without the first the last also is absolutely impossible.

1. What has been said has prepared the way for our discussion, first of all, of the chief demand of the Gospel, Saving Faith (*fides salvifica*), in its nature and operation. The importance of the subject is apparent, and no less the impossibility of our here entering upon general considerations of the nature of Faith in itself, its relation to science and knowledge, and other important inquiries, which rightly belong to the Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion rather than to the sphere of Subjective Soteriology. We have here evidently to do with that faith, of which the fruit is the salvation (ἡ σωτηρία) of the sinner.

[6] John v. 44.

2. The *necessity* of Faith in order that we may become personal partakers of the highest salvation, is declared in various ways in the Bible. Already in the Scriptures of the Old Testament is the excellence of Abraham evidently seen in his relation of faith to God,[1] and like voices speak to us, as we read 2 Chron. xx. 20; Ps. xxvii. 13, 14; Isa. vii. 9; Habak. ii. 4. The list of the faithful ones in the Old Testament, contained in Heb. xi., relieves us from the need of further proof. We find the Lord Himself at once set out with the claim of faith next to that of repentance,[2] and His Apostles follow in His steps, in Rom. i. 16, 17; 1 John v. 10; and numerous other passages. There is here no actual difference between the doctrine of the One, and that of the others; all constantly point out the same way of salvation, and represent that way as the only one.[3] Thus it is of the utmost importance that we do not mislead ourselves and others as to the proper direction of this path.

3. The *notion* we have in general to ascribe to the demand of Saving Faith is not difficult to indicate. We believe in a thing when we consider ourselves assured of its truth, in a person when we perfectly trust him. Believing is thus something different from guessing, supposing, conjecturing; it is not arbitrarily assuming as truth something of which we are not able to know anything. On the one hand, faith is opposed to sight,[4] on the other to doubt,[5] but in no case is it irreconcilably opposed to science and knowledge, to which, according to the testimony of the Apostolic writings and man's spiritual experience, it may rather lead in its own way.[6] True faith is in a certain sense spiritual knowledge, but knowledge of a peculiar kind; not of that which I myself have felt and experienced, but of that which on sufficient ground I recognise for myself as truth. Of anything which I believe I may be as certain as of anything which I positively know; but I am so for different reasons and in a different way. It is this subjective certainty of faith which is so emphatically referred to in the sacred description of faith in Heb. xi. 1, as it is also mentioned in Answer 21 of the Heidelberg Catechism, as an actual element of Saving Faith. For these reasons faith is now and then described as a spiritual SEEING[7] of that which is concealed from the eye of sense; an intuition of the invisible and eternal by the eye of the spirit, the ὄμμα τῆς ψυχῆς; an internal *rapport* with that which cannot be gained by any sensible experience or logical reasoning, and yet can still less be seriously questioned.

4. The *object* of that faith which is required from the sinner is by no means a collection of religious doctrines, still less the Bible *en bloc*, but, according to the words of Jesus,[8] the Gospel of the kingdom, of which the Bible is the sacred depository. Faith even has not at first, or chiefly, to do with the doctrine of the Gospel, but with the great fact here proclaimed, the fact of God's redeeming love in *Christ;* and since this fact, as it were, embodies itself in His person, we cannot be surprised that He Himself is so often proclaimed in the New Testament as the object of faith. He who asserts that it is not faith in Christ, but a faith in God similar to that

[1] Gen. xv. 6.
[2] Mark i. 15; xvi. 16.
[3] John iii. 18; 1 John v. 12.
[4] 2 Cor. v. 7.
[5] Rom. iv. 20.
[6] 2 Tim. i. 12; Heb. xi. 3; 1 John v. 13.
[7] John vi. 40; Heb. xi. 27.
[8] Mark i. 15.

which Christ Himself had, or which is effected through Him in us, that opens the way of salvation, must certainly have read the Gospel with strange eyes. For the formula Πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ means nothing else but a faith in Him, which places itself in the closest relation to Him. Since, however, the Son of God leads His own to the Father, and the Gospel came from God Himself, he who believes in Christ, must also naturally through and with Him believe in God, as He Himself ordains this.[9] Saving faith may thus with equal justice be called faith in the Gospel, in Christ, in God, according to the different sides from which we look at the same thing.

5. From all this we may already conclude in what the proper *nature* of saving faith consists. It is impossible that a mere conviction of the intellect concerning the Divinity of the Gospel, still less a vague trust in God as our Benefactor and Guardian, can be denoted by this name. A certain degree of knowledge is undoubtedly necessary where we speak of faith; of the three elements into which faith is often divided—knowledge, assent, and trust—not one can be altogether wanting. Yet is this last more certainly the soul and kernel of the faith which saves the sinner. In the inmost sanctuary of the soul it prefers to fix its seat; with the whole heart man believeth unto salvation.[10] The will, too, is not to be excluded here; the well-known "nemo credit, nisi volens," has a deep meaning. Hence, too, in the New Testament, mention is often made of the obedience of faith, as if to denote that by faith a deed, a moral act, is meant, by which the sinner is brought over from the old into an entirely new state. But the sphere in which this act is effected is still the heart, which voluntarily and unconditionally surrenders itself to Him, whom it absolutely trusts. The "not only to others, but to me too," of the twenty-first answer of the Heidelberg Catechism, is the watchword and glory of faith, and unlimited confidence is the strength of its inner life. It is a faith not only *on* Christ, which confesses His existence, and accepts His word as truth, but a faith *in* Christ, by which we accept Him for ourselves as the sole and all-sufficient Saviour. "Faith apprehends Christ, and takes actual hold of Him, and embraces Him, as the wedding-ring the jewel" (Luther). Thus there is not the slightest reason to place, as often is done, faith and assurance of faith markedly in contrast one to the other; faith without even the least assurance could not be called true faith.

This pure Evangelical conception of faith, however, was very early obscured in the Church of Christ. Through party strife the word faith (fides, *quâ* creditur) was used, in entire variance with the constant usage of the New Testament, to denote the *truth* of faith (fides, *quæ* creditur), and assent to this was considered a necessary condition of union with the orthodox Church. Take as an example the commencement of the "Quicumque vult." In place of a trustful faith in Christ, it ordains as necessary to salvation the holding definite dogmas as the truth. Thus in the Middle Ages a sharp distinction was made between mere faith (fides *informis*), and faith duly formed by love (fides *charitate formata*), and to this last, *i.e.*, properly to love and its works, was attributed the power for justification. It is the merit of the Reformation, that upon this point it

[9] Mark xi. 22; John xiv. 1; 1 Pet. i. 21. [10] Acts viii. 37; Rom. x. 10.

returned to the pure Pauline standpoint, and brought back the life of faith to its own proper sphere, from which it ought never to have been removed.[11]

6. If faith is nothing else but personal trust, then the question arises, upon what *ground* is that trust reared? This ground cannot possibly be in the believer himself, but necessarily must be external to him. He who to the question, Why do you believe? can give no other answer than, "Because I myself apprehend that it is true;" or, "Because it is now necessary for me to believe;" or, "Because God gives it to me"—gives an unsatisfactory answer. Faith accepts salvation in Christ *because* God Himself has revealed in His word that in Him, and in no one else, is there salvation for sinners.[12] God's own testimony concerning His Son, properly understood, tested, maintained, and accepted with an earnest desire for salvation, is thus the objective basis of faith. If, in addition, there should presently follow independent insight, internal certainty, and well-grounded experience, this is an inestimable and indispensable confirmation of that which, even without these seals, was already certain in itself, but has now, moreover, become truth and life in us. But the ground of this faith always remains objective in the first and subjective in the second place, not *vice versâ;* and there may be cases where the believer, as it were against himself, clings fast to the testimony of God, in accordance with the words of the poet,

> "Und ob mein Herz sagt lauter *Nein*,
> Soll doch Dein *Ja* gewisser sein."—WOLTERSDORFF.[13]

The testimony of the Holy Ghost is the subjective confirmation of the certainty of faith, which, before all, is built upon an objective historical basis.[14] Were it not so, how could it ever be said of the unbeliever that he "makes God a liar?"[15]

7. Built upon this firm basis, Saving Faith soon develops a peculiar *activity*. It begins with a coming to Christ with a heart longing for salvation; that coming leads to a being with Christ; that being, to a spiritual knowledge of Christ as its light, its life, its salvation; that knowing, to a resting and glorying in Him, the tone of which can rise to that of the highest happiness.[16] Under the most striking images is the communion of faith of the sinner with the Redeemer described by Jesus Himself,[17] as well as by St. Paul;[18] a communion of life too deep for hair-splitting analysis, and on this account, also, not unfittingly denoted in Dogmatics by the name of *Unio Mystica*. More especially does that Faith occupy itself with the Gospel promise concerning the forgiveness of sins, and does not rest until it is assured of its personal share in this inestimable benefit. It is then quite different from a transient[19] and external belief,[20] for which it can only be mistaken when

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[11] Compare *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxii.
[12] 1 John v. 10; *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 25.
[13] "And though my heart say only *Nay*,
Yet shall Thy *Yes* all else outweigh."
[14] Section xxxii.
[15] 1 John v. 10.
[16] Rom. viii. 31—39.
[17] John vi. 48—59; xv. 1—8.
[18] Ephes. ii. 4—6; Rom. vi. 4, *sqq.*
[19] Luke viii. 13.
[20] Matt. vii. 22.

viewed superficially. Its infallible *signs* are found partly in its properties, partly in its fruits. It is no dead power, but a self-conscious, living, active principle; no passive assent, but an actual embracing of the truth. Ever again it feels the need of renewed strength,[21] and reveals itself in its fidelity and constancy.[22] Undoubtedly it attains different degrees, but even in the lowest it will comport itself with humility, confidence, yea, even joy and courage. Above all, it is active in love,[23] and is known by its works, as the tree by its fruit,—but never will it seek in these works for the proper basis of its pardon.

8. After what has been said we have gained a height from which we can view the *demand* of such a faith in its proper light. That this faith is actually not only one of the many demands, but must be called the peculiar demand of the Gospel, as distinguished from the Law, is self-evident;[24] only superficiality can assert that this demand is easily answered. Believing is well-considered venturing, and the heart which must take this decisive step is by nature distrustful, proud, and attached to countless things, from which it must then completely sever itself.[25] And yet is this demand very far removed from being either impracticable or in any sense arbitrary. The former we shall treat of in the following Division; as to the other we merely observe now that the demand of faith is quite in unison, as well with the nature and present condition of man as with the dignity of God. Man is disposed to faith, since he is constituted for communion with an invisible world, and he will much more readily take refuge in miserable superstition, than find rest in absolute unbelief. Faith is the bond which holds together the family and society, Church and State, and the only one which places man in communion with his Maker. It is even a question whether in the land of sight faith can be completely wanting; as Da Costa says, "The highest happiness of the blessed is trust." But here, at least, in an earthly childhood-state, it becomes us, as it develops and educates us;[26] and properly viewed it is the only homage worthy of Him, which the insignificant creature can bring to the holy and true God.[27] Just as unbelief dishonours Him most deeply, so does nothing glorify Him more highly than complete trust. If now, after all, and with all this, we look at the salvation already attached here to faith in Christ, we cannot for an instant hesitate to call the supreme command at the same time an inestimable benefit.

9. But thus, also, we are by no means surprised to find an inseparable *connection* between the faith in Christ which we have described, and the salvation of the sinner. We might have presupposed the existence of such a connection on moral grounds, even if we were not taught it expressly in the Gospel. Thus much, however, is soon observed from a glance at this latter, that faith can in no degree be the meritorious cause of the salvation of the sinner. Nowhere is it taught that we are justified *on account of* (*propter*), but only that we are saved *by* (*per*) faith. In believing in Christ, we simply perform a holy duty; we cannot discover that there is any real

[21] Mark ix. 24; Luke xvii. 5.
[22] 2 Tim. iv. 7.
[23] Gal. v. 6; James ii. 26.
[24] John vi. 29; Gal. iii. 12; 1 John iii. 23.
[25] Matt. xvi. 24.
[26] 1 Cor. xiii. 9—13.
[27] Rom. iv. 20.

merit in it. The outstretched hand is not the cause wherefore, but the means whereby, the pauper receives the offered alms; even so faith is not the meritorious cause of, but simply the means to, the sinner's salvation (causa *non meritoria*, sed *instrumentalis*, ὄργανον λητπικόν). Yet is there by no means a mere external, but an intimate moral connection between faith and salvation, in consequence of which the last flows naturally and normally from the first. That faith, however, brings us into the closest relation to Him, without whom there is no salvation, and from whom the new life in the dead heart of the sinner proceeds. It kills in that heart the pride and sinful lust, which is the source of its deepest misery, and it gives, on the other hand, that peace, that joy, that hope, which now upon earth can give a foretaste of heaven. Thus it begins in us eternal life even here below, and it receives hereafter, from the faithful and merciful God, what it has expected from Him because of His own word. Thus faith in Christ from its own nature has a power which brings salvation.[28] It is as it were the fruitful parent tree, of which the everlasting blessedness of souls is the crown, and God's grace in Christ the root.

10. Hence it follows that faith *alone* is concerned, when the question must be answered, "How is the sinner saved from destruction, and made a partaker of salvation in Christ?" We shall return hereafter at greater length to the disputed point of justification by faith, or by works.[29] In itself it certainly deserves no special 'encomium' that Luther in his *Translation* of the Holy Scriptures has in Rom. iii. 28, inserted the words "*only* by faith." But that this addition may notwithstanding in the main be called the exact *explication* of the meaning of the Apostle, can easily be shown; and certainly the freedom of the Reformer is an almost trifling error, when compared with the blasphemous anathema of Trent, "Si quis dixerit fidem justificantem nihil aliud esse quam fiduciam divinæ misericordiæ, peccata remittentis propter Christum, vel eam fiduciam solam esse, quâ justificamur, anathema sit" (*Sess.* 6, *Can.* 12). The word of the Elector of Brandenburg, Joachim II., in 1540, to his ambassadors, who were going to attend the religious disputation at Worms, "Bring back with you the little word *sola*, or else dare not to come back," remains even against all the crypto-Catholicising sympathies and tendencies of our day a word of the highest significance.

Compare H. E. VINKE, *Oratio de fidei notione*, etc. (1855); J. R. WERNINK, *Exeget. Studien über* Πίστις *und* Πιστεύειν *im N. Test.* (1858); J. KOESTLIN, *Der Glaube, sein Wesen, Grund, und Bedeutung* (1859); L. SCHOEBERLEIN, the Art. *Glaube*, in Herzog, *R. E.*, v., pp. 170—174, and the literature mentioned there. For practical use, see the striking volume of Sermons, *Sold* (1844) of F. STRAUSS, the writer of the *Die Kirchenglockentöne.*

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Is it accurate to use Religion and Faith as words of one import?—Is the conception o Faith one and the same in all the writers of the New Testament?—Difference in the conceptions of the formula Πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.—Are there any passages in the New Testament where the "fides *quæ* creditur" is denoted by Πίστις?—Meaning of Rom. xiv. 23. —Elucidation of the nature of saving faith from the sacred history.—Is it possible to

[28] Luke vii. 50; xviii. 42.

[29] Compare Rom. xi. 6.

believe *in* Jesus, in the Scriptural sense of the term, from the standpoint of Modern Naturalism?—Difference between the Romish and Protestant conception of Faith, in its relation to Soteriology in general.—What meaning has the later Philosophy, beginning with Kant, attached to the demand of Saving Faith?—Meaning and importance of Luke xvii. 5, 6, compared with Mark ix. 24.

SECTION CXVIII.—TRUE REPENTANCE.

As saving faith in Christ, so is true repentance towards God absolutely necessary for every one who is to enter the Kingdom of God. It is as little possible without faith, as faith can be conceived without it, and in its nature it embraces nothing less than an absolute renewing of the internal and external life, by which the old man is put off, and a new man is born, in whom the original image of God, obscured by sin, thus lives again.

1. The transition from the doctrine of faith to that of repentance may be as simple as possible; for the demand of repentance is most closely connected with that of belief in the Gospel. The state, denoted by this word, is principally described by two others, of which one (*μετάνοια*) points out the internal change of mind, the other (*ἐπιστροφή*) the turning back into the way of righteousness, resulting from that change.[1] Even where renewing (*ἀνακαίνωσις*, Rom. xii. 2) and regeneration (*παλιγγενεσία*, Tit. iii. 5) is spoken of, nothing but this is meant, if we carefully consider the matter. A glance at such passages as Isa. i. 16, 17, Jer. iv. 1, and Ezek. xxxiii. 11, will teach us how emphatically the summons to such repentance had been already heard from the lips of Israel's Prophets. John the Baptist[2] and Jesus[3] both commenced their preaching with this demand. The Lord declared the calling sinners to repentance to be the object of His manifestation and labours,[4] and the successful attainment of this end increases the joy of heaven.[5] The same teaching stands in the forefront of the commission to His first witnesses,[6] and history testifies to the fidelity with which the Apostles at once discharged this part of their ministry.[7] Repentance is, certainly, according to the teaching of Holy Scripture, the great object of the goodness of God,[8] as well as of the punishment with which the Lord threatens the Church.[9] The doctrine of repentance is even reckoned in the Epistle to the Hebrews,[10] among the "first principles of the doctrine of Christ," the renewed mention of which the writer did not consider actually necessary; and the absence of all discussion on this point has apparently

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[1] Luke xvii. 4.
[2] Matt. iii. 2.
[3] Mark i. 15.
[4] Matt. ix. 13.
[5] Luke xv. 10; compare xiii. 5.
[6] Luke xxiv. 47.
[7] Acts ii. 38; iii. 19; xxvi. 17, 18.
[8] Rom. ii. 4.
[9] Rev. ii. 5, 21.
[10] Heb. vi. 1.

been the reason why it has not been further mentioned in the Œcumenical Symbols. In the confession of the Netherlands Church it is emphatically placed in the foreground, not without a polemical tendency against Rome.[11]

Only the question might arise, to what extent does the summons to repentance according to Scripture come to all, or does it come only to some? in other words, does it merely refer to Jews and heathen who still must be brought to the Gospel, or to such also as are already enlightened by the light of the Gospel? This last necessarily results from the confession that all without distinction are sinners, even though we may also grant that not all need repentance in the same sense and in the same degree. St. Paul at least hesitated not to direct the exhortation to change of mind without any limitation to an entire Christian community,[12] and the glorified Lord speaks to the Church of Asia Minor in the same spirit.[13] While the *way* of repentance may be infinitely different in different cases, *repentance itself* is necessary for all who are born of the flesh, and who for that very reason must be renewed by the Spirit.[14] Though a work of God, as will be seen hereafter, it is presented in the Gospel as a demand upon every sinner, just as the verb ἐπιστρέφειν is never met with in the New Testament in the passive voice, but always in the active or middle. The "whole" of Matt. ix. 12, just as the ninety and nine righteous of Luke xv. 7, are, as is evident from the context, merely men who have not departed from the external rule of the Law, and who thus, especially in their own estimation, need not healing or repentance, though they are perhaps actually further estranged than others from the life of God. The words of the Apostle, in 1 John iii. 9, find their natural elucidation in what he has declared before, in ch. i. 8—10; ii. 1.

2. The *nature* of a true conversion is apparent from the different descriptions and images, under which it is presented in Holy Scripture, viewed in the light of the reality of spiritual experience. It is thus immediately seen that conversion is something different from what we usually call moral improvement, or even higher civilisation and development, but in which the inner kernel of life has remained the same, without the slightest change. Not less is it to be distinguished from a partial laying aside of evil habits, while others of a like character are retained, or of a temporary desertion of sinful ways, to which the sinner soon returns again.[15] True repentance is not merely a turning to the Church, to virtue, to religion, but a returning to God, whose paths had been deserted for those of the world. It begins with a turning one's thoughts into oneself,[16] reveals itself in a turning away from sin, and celebrates its triumph in the turning of the entire internal and external life to Him, who is the source of both. In short, repentance, in relation to God and His will, is a new and unconditional Yea, in place of the former wrongful Nay; not a continuation of the old, but the beginning of a new line, an entire renewal of life. From regeneration, demanded in another place,[17] conversion is only distinguished in form; it

[11] See *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxiv.; *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 88—90.
[12] Rom. xii. 2; Ephes. iv. 23, 24.
[13] Rev. ii. 5.
[14] John iii. 5, 6.
[15] Luke xi. 24—26.
[16] Luke xv. 17.
[17] John iii. 3—6.

is the same thing, conceived there on its Divine side, here on its human; men must *be born again* by God, but they must *themselves* repent, though this be by the aid of a higher power. That this latter is not effected in all in the same manner, is evident. But yet there always belongs to the internal essence of repentance, that which the Apostle has pointed out, in striking imagery, in the passages already cited, and thus in every conversion we can distinguish four characteristics which in reality, as it were spontaneously, flow the one into the other.

3. The first element in true repentance is a *genuine sorrow towards God*, in other words, an inward grief, because we have not only broken His laws, and thus made ourselves unhappy, but have returned His benefits with the basest ingratitude. It is this sorrow, of which St. Paul speaks in 2 Cor. vii. 10; and of which we see a striking example in David and Peter, as well as in others. The comparison of the repentance of these two with that of Esau, or of Judas, shows at once the distinction between true and false contrition. While the latter laments over the consequences of the sin more than over the evil itself, and the sinner will still justify himself in vain pride, the former is in its essence a deep, humble sorrow for sin; not a mere superficial *attrition* (to make use of an old distinction), springing from the fear of punishment, but an inward *contrition*, a crushing of the heart, in consequence of the liveliest sense of guilt. The degree and direction of this sorrow may differ according to age, character, or external circumstances; but the thing itself cannot fail to exist in any one who treads the path of repentance, and it will always fill the heart with shame for the past, feeling of sorrow for the present, and unrest for the future, but along with it must personal confession of guilt to God, and where necessary, to men also, become an absolute necessity.

4. To this succeeds an internal *repugnance* to sin, accompanied by an actual *forsaking* of sin. Where the eye is open to the guilt of sin, the heart cannot but feel unhappy under its dominion. Now it hates what it had loved before, now it avoids what then it sought; the spirit resumes the sovereignty over the flesh, where before the flesh had caused its omnipotence to be felt. If the conscience was before insensible even to inexcusable faults, it now becomes tender even to smaller errors. Hence it feels an irresistible impulse to repair as far as possible the misdeeds it has wrought before; not, by so doing, to merit anything, but to prove by the deeds of righteousness the changed condition of feeling.[18] Hence, too, follows the effort, with ever increasing force, to fight not merely against some, but against all sins, and to avoid as far as possible every contact with anything which defiles internal purity.[19] The old man still lives, but crucified to sin and the world,[20] and even before the death of the old the new man is conceived within.

5. Thus repentance strives onward to a joyous *self-surrender* to the service of God and the Lord. The confession of guilt was not a fruit of despair, but of belief in grace, sought and found in the path of the deepest contrition. The determination to repent is thus not merely fostered, but fulfilled; at first the man gave himself up, but now he surrenders himself up.

[18] Luke xix. 8. [19] 1 Thess. v. 22; Jude 23. [20] Gal. v. 24.

conditionally. Thus we may say that true sorrow for sin always contains at the outset a hidden germ of joy, because the wound drives the sufferer to the Physician. Henceforth the negative is succeeded by the positive; hatred of sin becomes dedication to the living God, and the inner centre of life in the sinner is so completely removed, that the former "I" has become a "no longer I."[21] Thus it is but natural that the hitherto troubled soul becomes now both enlarged and purified, so that Luther could truly declare to Staupitz that the word *repentance* (*Busse*), which he formerly thought the most terrible word in the Bible, had afterwards become for him the most joyous.

6. The pacified heart's earnest wish will be to tread the way of God's commandments.[22] Thus repentance becomes an all-predominating *striving* to glorify God, and to increase in all that is well pleasing to Him; together with the direction of life, the aim of life has become a different one; and the great question of Acts ix. 6b is now the question which dominates everything. To the essence of real repentance it belongs, that it gradually develops into the life of sanctification.[23] It is impossible to be really repentant, and to live at the same time in undisturbed peace and amity with any sin, after it has been recognised as such. Hence, too, even the most sincere repentance is never perfected, and for the Christian, after every step forward or falling back, renewed repentance remains a necessity. It cannot rest until the old things are entirely passed away, and all things are become new.[24]

7. If this is the nature of true repentance, according to Scripture and Experience, we must confess and regret that the Christian Church but too soon departed from this pure evangelical conception. Already the churchly system of penitence, which was applied with increasing severity in and after the third century, contains not a little which was in direct conflict with the letter and spirit of the teaching of our Lord. It became still worse when, in the Middle Ages, the Evangelical doctrine of repentance was forgotten in favour of the priestly sacrament of penitence, for which three things were inevitably demanded, viz., *contritio cordis*, *confessio oris*, *satisfactio operis*. Well known is the misuse which was made of confession, and of what value the good works often were, by which the Church desired that the reality of repentance should be evident. Certainly it was the beginning of an improvement of doctrine on this point, too, when the Lutheran Church, whatever value it set upon works of repentance, yet brought back the third point within just limits, and supplanted auricular confession by the more general confession of guilt and sorrow. Specially, however, in the Reformed Church, from which the stool of confession was entirely banished, was the doctrine of penitence and repentance, in so far as theory was concerned, restored in its Apostolic simplicity, though practically there was too often cause to think on those severe words, "In earlier times at any rate forgiveness cost something, now men simply forgive themselves" (Cl. Harms). Between the Pelagian self-righteousness of Rationalism, and the actual practice of the doctrine of

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[21] 2 Cor. v. 15; Gal. ii. 20.
[22] Ps. cxix. 32.
[23] Section cxx.
[24] 2 Cor. v. 17.

penance of Romanism, the distance in principle is much less than appears on a superficial examination. A deeper conviction of the serious nature of sin and judgment, than that from which both of these start, is needed; and this is met with in the doctrine of repentance, which the Church of the Reformation confesses, in agreement with Scripture.

8. If we ask what is the *connection* which exists between Saving Faith and the repentance of the sinner, then it appears in general that the two are inseparable from one another, as they are indeed most closely united by Jesus and His Apostles.[25] If we define more accurately, keeping in view the wide circuit of the idea of repentance, we must say that this *partly* precedes belief, *partly* coincides with it, *partly* issues from and necessarily follows it. The first is apparent in the beginning of μετάνοια, sorrow for and unrest under sin, a penitent feeling of guilt accompanied with a desire for grace, like that of the "dolentis vindicta, semper puniens in se, quod dolet se commisisse," of Augustine. In this sense the preacher of repentance must always precede the Evangelist, and the descent into the depths of self-knowledge the ascent into the heaven of Divine knowledge, and the claim of faith may be called the second, and not the first demand.—Where, however, this belief now accepts salvation in Christ, and enters into the closest communion with Him, there that faith itself may be called the greatest change in thought and life. Indeed, it makes us turn away entirely from ourselves, to direct our eyes humbly and trustingly to the grace of God in Christ, and to die to sin in order to live solely in and for Christ. Such a surrender and change, properly regarded, is nothing else indeed but a repentance in principle; the one is as little conceivable without the other, as light without shadow.—Where, lastly, the internal change of mind (μετάνοια) appears more and more as a complete turning (ἐπιστροφή) in life, and brings about the birth of an entirely new state of life, there this is evidently the fruit of faith, and it is this quite exact, but not entirely complete view, which is specially prominent in the Confession and Dogmatics of the Reformed Church.[26] Real repentance of heart and life is impossible without love, but this last is not conceivable where the trust of faith is wanting. So this belief first causes desire and courage and power for a daily renewed repentance, which brings forth the fruits of the new obedience. On the other hand, too, the penitent sorrow is not merely calmed by faith, it is also increased, because, in proportion as we believe in a higher love, and experience a richer mercy, we shall feel the more sorrow on account of the enormity of evil.[27] There is thus a reflexive operation in the domain of faith and repentance, in which too sharp definition will rather prevent than produce a right theory and practice.

9. If the two are so intimately united, repentance can occupy no other *place* than does faith, in the way of salvation ordained of God. Just as little as this last can it be the proper efficient cause of forgiveness of sins and salvation. If here and there the promise of forgiveness is attached to the demand for repentance,[28] it is not because the latter gives any right to the

[25] Mark i. 15; Acts xxvi. 18.
[26] *Neth. Conf.*, Art xxiv.; Calv. *Inst.*, iii. 3.
[27] Jer. xxxi. 19.
[28] Acts ii. 38; iii. 19.

enjoyment of the former, but only because man cannot without a complete change of mind even desire forgiveness, much less accept it and enjoy it for himself. We can as little justify ourselves by the suffering of sorrow, as by working the works of love. If the Romish Church thinks it can find in Luke vii. 47 a proof for its doctrine, that the manifestation of love is the *ground* of forgiveness, it shows that it understands the proper meaning of the expression as little as the true context of the words.[29] What the Lord says, must evidently serve to explain the mystery, why this sinful woman had shown so much love to Him, while Simon on the contrary had shown so little. From the effect He deduces the cause ; from the warmth of her love, the greatness of the pardon with which she has been touched ; it is as if we said, "The sun has risen, *for* it is day."—Again, on the other hand, it must be allowed that repentance is as indispensable to salvation as faith, since the latter remains inconceivable without the former, and because men without repentance would be absolutely incapable of the enjoyment of salvation, even though given by grace.[30]

10. As a *conclusion* from all that has been said, we may declare, that personal entrance into the Kingdom of God is not a fruit of the natural development of the good within us, but of a spiritual process of renewal which must be experienced within, and is actually decided in the domain of the will. Hence, too, it follows, (*a*) for ourselves, that Repentance, like Faith, must be still something more for us than a more or less important chapter in a Dogmatic system, but a life-question for the greatest Theologian as well as for the least educated of the laity ; and (*b*) for our preaching, that the word of repentance must at all times, but even more in these days, make up its chief part, if we would really fulfil our commission. We shall succeed the better in it, in proportion as we are strongly armed against a fourfold foe in this domain. The first is (α) practical Pelagianism, which considers repentance unnecessary, except for some monstrous sinners, or else, when accompanied by Indifferentism, postpones it as long as possible. The second is (β) a passive Quietism, which does not regard repentance as a duty, but only as a gift, for which we may listlessly wait. Thirdly, there is (γ) a sectarian Methodism, which will have all men repent according to one and the same model, and in the same way. And the fourth is (δ) an unspiritual Pharisaism, which, taken up with itself, too soon bids farewell to repentance, as to a thing already done with, whilst it needs in the highest degree the lesson of love, "pour assortir votre Christianisme, commencez par convertir votre conversion." (A Monod.)

Compare AUGUSTINE, *De verâ et falsâ pœnitentiâ ;* J. P. STRICKER, *Diss. Theol. de Mutatione, homini secundum Jesu et App. doctr. subeundâ* (1845) ; an essay of J. BUSCH KEISER, in *Waarheid in Liefde* (1840), iii.; A. WUTTKE, *Christl. Sittenl.*, 2nd ed., ii. (1865), p. 222, *sqq. ;* and KLING'S article, *Bekehrung*, in Herzog, *R.E.*, ii., p. 1, *sqq.*

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

What is the distinction between the demand for repentance, from the standpoint of the Old Testament, and from that of the New ?—Wherein is founded on one side the difficulty, and on the other the possibility, of repentance ?—Connection of, and distinction between,

[29] Luke vii. 41, 42.

[30] Rev. xxi. 27.

repentance and regeneration.—Comparison of the system of penance of the Old Church with the Evangelical doctrine of repentance.—In what degree is confession of guilt to men required? (James v. 16.)—The doctrine of confession and penance in the Lutheran Church.—Repentance from the standpoint of Methodism and Pietism.—The self-emancipation of the sorrowing sinner from the standpoint of Modern Naturalism.—The intimate alliance of Romanism and Rationalism in the moral domain.—The crypto-Catholicising tendencies of later days, even in this direction.—Meaning and truth of James v. 19, 20.

SECTION CXIX.—GOOD WORKS.

The genuineness of saving faith and true repentance is seen from the Good Works, which from the nature of the case are inseparable from them, and as fruits of gratitude are absolutely necessary, but in no sense the meritorious cause of the salvation of the sinner, or of the future bliss of the Christian.

1. We have already seen that true repentance reveals itself in good works, but the importance of the subject itself, as well as the conflict waged on this point between Rome and the Reformation, renders necessary an express discussion also of this point in Christian Dogmatics. As to the *idea* of good works, it is known that there is already not a little difference of view upon this subject, whilst we meet nowhere in the teaching of Jesus and His Apostles with a properly so-called definition of the same. Still the definition of this idea in its objective and subjective meaning cannot, in the light of the Gospel and of conscience, be very difficult. In the first named we understand by good works such outward manifestations of the inner disposition of the heart as are founded not merely on our own fancy, or on the will of others, but are wrought in unison with the law of God, from a pure principle, and with the aim of glorifying Him. Nothing is morally good, save only that which God wills, and because He wills it; even the very best which men demand, only deserves consideration when it can be shown to be, at least in principle, in unison with the will and law of God. Hence it lies equally in the nature of the case that the moral principle defines the value of deeds, as that the honour of God must always remain the highest aim of every effort. The watchword "in majorem Dei gloriam," though often abused, must be the very highest motto of Christains. An act becomes, in addition, subjectively good when it is done with the clear consciousness that in this way we fulfil our personal calling. This is the profound meaning of the words of the Apostle in Rom. xiv. 23, which has already been denoted to a certain degree by the cautious proverb, "in dubiis abstine." The conviction thus advanced may undoubtedly be a miserably deceptive one;[1] and everything which is

[1] Acts xxvi. 9.

called subjectively good, is not on that account such in the objective sense of the word. It is thus of the utmost importance that the conscience be duly illuminated; but in no case can it be right to act in opposition to the conscience. For surely everything which is objectively good must justify itself also subjectively as such for our consciousness, if we will still really possess the conviction of having done right according to the will of God, and our own power.[2]

2. The *demand* for such good works is made so indubitably and expressly in Holy Scripture, that there cannot possibly be any misunderstanding about it. See, for example, the words of Isaiah, ch. i. 16, 17; of the Baptist, Matt. iii. 8; of Jesus Himself, Matt. vii. 21; John xv. 8; and of St. Paul, Tit. iii. 8. But it is not unnecessary to observe to what men this demand is properly addressed, and by whom alone it can rightly be fulfilled. The demand for good works is definitely made on those who have begun to believe, and who wish to show that they have chosen the path of repentance. Hence, as an external exhibition of the internal feeling, good works can thus be only required from those, in whom faith is at any rate present in its germ.[3] We cannot expect living fruit from a dead tree; where, however, there is life, it is not only desirable, but absolutely necessary, that the fruit be shown in a suitable form.

3. The *necessity* for good works has its ground not only in the demand which God's word makes on every believer; so that, if that claim be occasionally not understood, the good work may also be equally well omitted. On the contrary, between faith and works there is not merely an external connection, much less a purely accidental one, but an internal and organic union. A tree does not bear its fruit because God has once for all so appointed it; but because from its nature, while it has real life, and is not encumbered by other hindrances, it must necessarily bear fruit. Hence the unbridled license of theoretical and practical Antinomianism is as immoral and antichristian as the self-righteousness of the Pharisaic Legalism. It is not merely permissible, but obligatory, to enforce as emphatically as possible the necessity of good works where faith is once present.—Indeed, it is just by this path that the final aim of redemption, which is entirely and absolutely a moral end, is attained.[4]—Besides, by this the sincerity of faith is made evident. It is desirable to be assured, and to *continue* always assured, of one's own faith; this is impossible in any other way than that of a sound practice. We learn best to know the existence, the degree, and the high value of our faith, by the fruit which it produces in our life.—Thus, too, real Christianity recommends itself to others, and by the eloquence of facts puts to shame the violence of its enemies.[5]—Lastly, by such a course of life, tending as it does to the glory of God, the capacity for the work and joy of heaven is increased. Our salvation is a fruit of faith, but the degree and measure of future glory stands in indissoluble connection with the height which is here gained in the moral domain.[6]—He therefore, who so contrasts the Gospel and the law, that the former loses its character of "the perfect law of liberty,"[7] is as

[2] See *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 91.
[3] Luke vi. 45.
[4] Gal. i. 4; Titus ii. 14.
[5] Matt. v. 13—16; Rom. ii. 24.
[6] Matt. v. 8; Heb. xii. 14.
[7] James i. 25.

little a labourer in the service of truth, as in the interest, when properly understood, of virtue and morality.[8]

4. Though upon all these grounds we thus positively recognise the necessity of good works, as little can we, or ought we, to allow their *meritoriousness*, so soon as we begin to speak of the everlasting salvation of the sinner. We recognise the "necessitas *mandati*," but we deny the "necessitas *meriti*." When we thus touch on the great vital question of the Reformation, the question immediately arises—Against what *enemy*, in what *sense*, upon what *grounds*, and for what *reasons*, do we announce, and continue to maintain, the immeritoriousness of good works?

The self-righteousness which was so emphatically resisted by the Reformers, showed itself already in the first ages of the Church, and had even been developed earlier in the form of Pharisaism.[9] However clearly faith in Christ had been exalted by the earliest Fathers as the infallible means to salvation, still the works of love also were soon put forward not merely as fruits of faith, but as conducive to the eternal salvation of the faithful. Clemens Romanus, for example,[10] mentions obedience and love as means for obtaining remission of sins, and already in the *Shepherd of Hermas* (*Similitud.* iii. 5, 3) we find the first traces of the doctrine of the so-called works of supererogation (*opera supererogationis*). Thus men quickly began, in connection with the severer system of penance, to consider good works as absolutely necessary conditions for the forgiveness, at least, of those sins which were committed after baptism. The tears of sorrow, the alms of compassion,—above all, the martyr's baptism of blood,—these all obtained in the general estimation a saving efficacy. Soon, too, Pelagianism co-operated in exalting personal righteousness to the throne: where no moral corruption was recognised, the exhibition of virtue in its own strength could not possess aught but a meritorious character. Gradually, too, a distinction was drawn between an ordinary and a higher measure of virtue, which could not be demanded from all, but which, where it was exercised, gave a special claim on the good-will of the Lord. On the other hand, the pure evangelical conception of faith withdrew almost entirely into the shade; and men began to consider faith as a mere intellectual acceptance and recognition of the truth, which could very well exist without love, and so, too, without spiritual life. "Credere nihil aliud est, quam cum assensione cogitare" (Augustine). In opposition to such a believing as recognised in the doctrine of the Church, there was allowed only to the faith which works by love (fides *formata*), a power for justification; and the love, which made up its soul and being, was presented as the meriting cause of salvation. Scholasticism has specially developed the doctrine of the meritoriousness of the works of love in its full logical sequence, by the mouth of Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas. "Fides formata est virtus, fides autem informis non est virtus" (Thomas Aquinas). The angelic doctor indeed distinguishes between *meritum ex congruo*, and *meritum e condigno*. By the first he understands that purely natural goodness, which God will recompense in accordance with His promises, although it does not deserve this of itself;

[8] Compare *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 86, 87.
[9] Luke xviii. 11, 12.
[10] Cl. Rom., Ep. i., *ad Corinth*, c. 50.

by the other, the virtue of the regenerate, which, as the fruit of a grace infused from above (*gratia infusa*), gives an actual claim to salvation. This last, however, according to his doctrine, was within the reach of every one; it was even thought possible to cover the moral deficiency of others by one's own merits. According to Alexander Hales († 1245), the merits of Christ and His saints formed together a treasure, which was placed at the disposal of the Church (*thesaurus supererogationis*), and in this men could personally obtain a part, either by an ordinary or extraordinary practice of duty and sacrifice. Thus the churchly traffic in indulgences gained a theological basis, and he who followed not merely the precepts (*præcepta*), but the counsels (*consilia*) of the Gospel could obtain full satisfaction for himself or for others. In giving an answer to the question, What are good works? self-will soon played as free a part as priestly deceit; and it was almost as if such expressions as Matt. xv. 9, and Mark x. 23, had been utterly erased from the Gospel. We see even the noblest spirits of that age led more or less astray by the wiles of Pelagianism, and souls such as Thomas à Kempis continued to be deprived of perfect peace, because faith in a grace which freely forgives guilt was still partly wanting to them.

5. It was against this comfortless doctrine of self-righteousness that Luther raised his voice of thunder. Convinced in the school of a heart-breaking experience of the complete impossibility of the justification of the sinner before God by his own virtue, and thoroughly penetrated by the consciousness that there could be no thought of any good works, so long as the conscience was not first set at ease, and faith in God's prior love[11] kindled in the heart, with the strength of a giant he attacked the hierarchical Judaism. He did not disguise the fact, that the greater part of patristic tradition by no means favoured his doctrine; but he found abundant support in St. Paul and Augustine, and the "Not of works, lest any man should boast," of Eph. ii. 9, became the kernel of his doctrine, as well as the comfort of his heart. "To say that faith justifies, and yet is nothing without works, is to blow hot and cold from one mouth. . . Good, holy works never make a good, holy man; but a good, holy man does good, holy works." Faith certainly was to him more than an abstract acceptance of truth; it was a confiding of the heart, "a Divine work in us, which does not first ask whether there are good works to be done, but has already done them ere the question has been asked; which is so certainly assured of God's grace, as to be willing to die for it a thousand times" (*Preface of the Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*). He did not deny that this faith may also be called an act, but so much the more did he deny that that act was in itself in any degree meritorious, and no less that faith properly justified the sinner *in consequence of* its fruits or works. On the contrary, "fides non propterea justificat, quod ipsa tam bonum opus tamque præclara virtus sit, sed quia in promissione Evangelii meritum Christi apprehendit et amplectitur" (*Form. Conc.*).

Entirely in unison herewith do we too repeat "docemus cum Apostolo hominem justificari solâ fide in Christum, quia fides Christum justitiam nostram recipit" (*Conf. Helv. Secunda*). We do not assert that good works are unne-

[11] 1 John iv. 19.

cessary, or a matter of indifference, still less that they are more injurious than conducive to salvation (*perniciosa ad salutem*), as was declared by Nicholas Amsdorff (1559) at the time of the Reformation. Though the paradox was originally spoken with reference to the so-called "good works" of Rome, and can thus be defended to a certain degree, it was with reason at once quickly and unmistakably opposed as dangerous exaggeration. Equally inaccurate is the statement that Protestant faith justifies the sinner, even when it does not lead to good works (Möhler); since without any fruit whatever it must undoubtedly be dead. Faith justifies, but not *because* it bears the fruit of good works; it justifies *alone*, because it brings us into communion with Christ, who is our righteousness before God. It is thus certainly not the value of faith, as a religious principle in itself, which constitutes its justifying power (Scholten). It is not religious truth in general, but the special fact of God's forgiving grace in Christ, to which the saving confidence of faith is directed; justification and sanctification must as little be confounded one with another, as arbitrarily separated. Undoubtedly this saving faith (*fides specialis*) works also by love,[12] yet it is not with an eye to this working that God looks upon and accepts the sinner. On the contrary, even the most active faith continues to confess, "Meum meritum misericordia domini," and also, "Sufficit ad meritum scire, quod non sufficiant merita" (Bernard of Clairvaux).

6. The *ground* for this confession is evidently given in the Gospel of the Scriptures. According to Luke xvii. 10, he who has done all which he might justly be required to do could only be called an "unprofitable servant;" and the whole of the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians is a continuous proof of the harmony between the Reformers, and their true sons, and the great Apostle of the Gentiles. Though St. Paul unconditionally allows that the law is not made void, but much more established by faith,[13] he has nowhere ascribed to the works *of the law* (which must be carefully distinguished from *good* works) any of that saving power, which according to him is exclusively connected with faith. How forcible in this respect are such utterances as Acts xiii. 38, 39; Phil. iii. 4—9; Gal. ii. 14—21!—The nature of the case teaches also that grace may be refused, but can never be merited, and that in no case can this meriting be the consequence of any of our good works. Indeed, the best works of the believing remain imperfect and always stained with sin. They cannot possibly counterbalance the infinite shortcomings which exist on the other side. The actual good in us is itself a gift and work of grace, which cannot thus in any way give us a claim to special reward. Yea, conscience testifies that we have never yet done all the good which God justly demands of us.—What wonder then, if this be so, that many an undoubted testimony, even from the bosom of the Romish Church, has on this point confirmed the confession of the Reformation! The higher God's saints stand, the more deeply do they show themselves penetrated with the consciousness that their own righteousness before God is nothing but "filthy rags."[14] Think, for example,

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[12] Gal. v. 6.
[13] Rom. iii. 31; compare Matt. v. 17.
[14] Isa. lxiv. 6.; compare Ps. cxliii. 2; Luke xviii. 13.

of the striking confessions made by Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, Luther, H. Grotius, Bossuet, and others in the prospect of eternity.

7. *Objections*, it is true, have also been brought against this confession, but they cannot force us to retract one word of what we have said.—If an appeal be made to those expressions of Holy Scripture where God is said to reward good works, it does not absolutely follow that that reward is merited,—in other words, that God would be obliged to give it, or man justified in demanding it from his Maker. This could only be the case from a purely legal standpoint; but the Gospel places us towards God, not in the relation of servants to their Lord, but of children to their Father, and causes us to expect infinitely more from His love than we could be said to earn in strictest justice.[15]—If men point to the distinction between the doctrine of Paul (Rom. iii. 28), and that of James (ch. ii. 14—26), we must not overlook the fact that the two by no means understand the same thing by the words *faith* and *works*. In St. Paul faith is a communion of life with Christ, which is inconceivable without fruit; in St. James, on the contrary, faith in this connection is an intellectual assent to the truth,[16] which may exist without any influence on the life. Paul denies that the works *of the law* can justify the sinner before God; James, on the other hand, declares that the works *of faith* are necessary to prove its reality. He conflicts, therefore, not with Paul, to whose words in Gal. v. 6, he would undoubtedly have willingly subscribed, but with a one-sided Paulinism, which, in consequence of misconception, threatened to work fatally in practice. "James goes from the external to the internal, from the phenomenon to the substance, from the circumference to the centre, from the fruit to the tree. Paul, on the other hand, proceeds from the internal to the external, from the substance to the phenomenon, from the centre to the circumference, from the root to the blossom and fruit" (Schaff). The Evangelical Church prefers to place itself at the Pauline standpoint, the Romish at that of James; but the last has not, as the first often has, recognised the truth which is to be found in the side apparently opposed to it. If, which we deny, the views of Paul and James continued absolutely incompatible one with the other, the dogmatic system of the former would undoubtedly on internal grounds deserve the preference.—Lastly, if appeal be made to the fearful abuse of the doctrine of the unmeritoriousness of our good works, as that which can only make careless and godless men, then we apply here the saying of Melancthon, "Fides non existere potest, nisi in pœnitentiâ." He who abuses this truth shows that he has never possessed true faith. It remains "impossible that he who is grafted into Christ by a true faith, should not bring forth the fruits of gratitude."[17]—"Nec fidem nec justitiam retinent illi, qui ambulant secundum carnem."[18] Besides, has the doctrine of the meritoriousness of good works led to less fearful abuse than that of their unmeritoriousness?

8. Not without *reason* do we also continue, even in our time, to maintain our confession of the unmeritoriousness of good works against all this opposition. We do not indeed deny that at the era of the Reformation

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[15] Matt. xx. 1—16.
[16] James ii. 19.
[17] *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 64.
[18] *Apol. Conf. Aug.*

the antithesis between faith and works was sometimes raised too high in the heat of the conflict, and should not need to make any difficulty in itself against the formula of conciliation, which was proposed at Regensburg in 1541, "That we are justified by a living and *operative* (efficacem) faith," provided only that this operativeness (*efficacitas*) were never conceived as the properly so-called meritorious cause of salvation. History and experience teach us, however, that this last has still a constant place in the theory and practice of the Romish Church, and thus we are indeed forced to think of the words of Luther, "If this doctrine fails us, we are undone." It is indeed the chief doctrine and characteristic of the Gospel, not only as preached to the Jews, but also to the Gentiles; and it is this very doctrine which distinguishes it from the Law, from the Prophets, and also from every purely human doctrine of salvation and life.—It is also the chief corner-stone of the building of the Reformation, which in principle is entirely comprehended in the words of the Apostle, Rom. i. 16, 17. If we think of the history of Luther, and regard not merely the Confessions of the Church, but also the private writings of the Reformers; yea, the books of martyrs and the experiences of their true sons, we hear everywhere an echo of the same keynote.[19] In the constant strife which the Reformed Church is obliged to wage for its life against Rome, this very doctrine is always its most effective weapon.—It stands, finally, in the closest connection, as well with the honour of Christ as the sole and all-sufficient Saviour, as with the humiliation, quieting, and sanctifying of the sinner, whom in eternity his works will follow,[20] but will not go before to forbid him entrance, and who, first where absolute unworthiness before God is confessed, can strive through the depths of humiliation towards the shining heights of Christian *sanctification.*

Compare *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxiv., *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 59—64, and in connection therewith J. J. VAN OOSTERZEE, *Leerrede over den 23en en 24en Zondag;* also K. HASE, *Handb. der Protest. Polemik.* (1862), pp. 255—286; H. C. VOORHOEVE, *De Leer der Rechtvaardiging, eene Paulin. studie* (1859); J. A. DORNER, *Die Rechtf. durch den Gl. in ihrer Bedeutung für Christl. Erkenntniss und Christl. Leben*, one of the two *Kirchentagsvorträge*, at Kiel (1867); *Die Rechtfertigung des Sünders vor Gott*, by E. PREUSS, (1868); *Die Rechtfertigung allein aus dem Glauben in Lichte der neueren Theol.*, by Dr. W. H. KOOPMAN (1870); F. REIFF, *Die Ev. Rechtf. Lehre und das moderne Denken* (1870); A. EBRARD, *Sola. Wissensch. Beleuchtung von Dr. Beck's Rechtf. Lehre* (1871). Here deserves special mention the well-known Treatise of AONIO PALEARIO, *Del Beneficio di Cristo Crucifisso*, of which more than 40,000 copies were distributed in Italy at the time of the Reformation; and which, after being destroyed as completely as Rome could destroy it, and deemed lost, has again appeared in the present century, and been published anonymously under the title of *Von der Wohlthat Christi*, at Leipsic, in 1855. This work has been translated into English, and published by the Religious Tract Society. Also the famous *Reformationsvortrag* of F. V. REINHARD, circulated in 1800 over a great part of Germany. Compare N. C. KIST, *Ned. Arch. voor K. G.* (1841), i., p. 193.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

The differing import of ἔργον and ἔργα in the Scriptures of the New Testament.—Probable cause why the absolute immeritoriousness of good works was so quickly forgotten in the Christian Church.—Extent and influence of the practical Pelagianism of the

[19] Isa. xlv. 24.

[20] Rev. xiv. 13.

Romish Church in the Middle Ages.—History and criticism of Antinomianism in the Churches of the Reformation.—A. Osiander and the Majoristic controversy.—Relation, at the present time, between Romanist and Non-Romanist on this point.—Import of the dogma for the science, and the life of faith.—Is a higher unity between Paul and James conceivable? and to what extent is this shown in the Scriptures of the New Testament?—Connection of this part of Soteriology with other very important parts of the doctrine of Salvation.

SECTION CXX.—CHRISTIAN SANCTIFICATION.

Where saving faith and real repentance thus show themselves fruitful in good works, there has an important step been already taken on the path of Christian Sanctification, to which the Gospel calls us. This consists in the continued renewing of the internal and external life, not at the cost of, but to the advantage of, the individual nature, and is revealed in the persistent effort in everything voluntarily to fulfil the will of God, and bear the image of Christ. Its degrees are different, and its limits invisible, but its goal is never perfectly attained here below.

1. If the dark side of the distinction between the doctrine of Salvation and of Life is anywhere apparent, it is certainly in that part of subjective Soteriology which is now to be discussed. In its full extent the doctrine for Christian Sanctification belongs to the domain of Ethics; in that of Dogmatics it can only be treated in so far as this is necessary to make us understand and estimate the demands of the Gospel in connection with the work of redemption. And then it is at once evident that the demand for Christian sanctification stands in direct *connection* with that of faith, repentance, and good works. It is the continuing of the new line, begun with these, and can thus, as an advance on the way of life, be only desired and expected, where a beginning has really been made. In sanctification faith and repentance are not resolved, but continued and completed. It is not the progress of the man, who is now no longer child and youth; but that of the tree, in which root, stem, and fruit continue to co-exist, even where this last has fully ripened. The tree grows higher in proportion as its roots sink deeper, but conversely, too, the growth extends not merely to the fruit, but also to the branches and root.

2. If the *demand* for sanctification comes thus specially to those who already believe in Christ and have turned to God, it comes to them all without exception, and with the most serious emphasis. In principle it was already prescribed to the people of Israel;[1] by the King of the Kingdom of God it was proposed to all His subjects,[2] and was repeated in various

[1] Lev. x. 3; xix. 2.

[2] Matt. v. 8, 44—48.

forms by His Apostles.[3] Undoubtedly every believer is already in principle sanctified by the power of his communion with Christ,[4] but this state must actually show itself in a life of continued holiness, and this last is inconceivable without a self-conscious and incessant effort. Faith unites us to Christ; but yet holiness by no means proceeds from that involuntarily and without our co-operation, as something which is a matter of course. Between the purely natural domain and the higher spiritual life, there is a difference which must not be overlooked. Sanctification in the Christian is no inner process of nature, which is accomplished independently of him, as it were spontaneously; but each new decisive step in this path is made in consequence of the operation of the now fixed and sanctified *will*. We are thus concerned here very really with personal activity; and to the "work out *your own* salvation," specially, no less emphasis must be attached than to that other, "Ye are complete *in* Him." As in justification the receptivity, so in sanctification is the spontaneity of the individual, the prominent feature. Our Christian calling is not only that we should become sanctified, and suffer ourselves to be sanctified, but that in God's power we sanctify ourselves, and perfect holiness.[5]

3. The *essence* of Christian sanctification consists thus in nothing less than in a continuous renewal and entire reformation of the inner and outer man. It stands to regeneration as the continued development of life to the mysterious origin of life, and is an increasing self-conscious *beginning and growth* of that which we shall hereafter perfectly *be* in and through Christ. "Sanctification is the process by which human nature is set free from its *unhallowed* character" (Martensen). The more it increases the more are all the forces and powers of the original man brought under the sway of the new principle of life, and the balance of the inner life, which had been overthrown by sin, restored; yet always in such wise that the individuality is not destroyed, but set free, and exalted, according to the well-known saying of Augustine, "Gratia non tollit, sed sanat naturam." The fig tree formerly unfruitful now becomes fruitful; but the rose never becomes the grape; the sanctified Peter never a John or a Paul. There is in every man a natural element which is oppressed by sin, and in a moral sense as it were bound; this internal captive is set free at conversion, and in sanctification it again appears in new splendour. Hence we recognise easily in the expression of the new man the physiognomy of the old, while inversely the failings of the former testify to the force of the latter, which is indeed resisted, but not yet overcome.[6] Thus far, too, Christian sanctification may be called a growing formation of character in the man, whose deliverance in its first stage is begun, while that character originates as a consequence of a normally developed will. Thus Christ obtains a visible, but at the same time peculiar form, in each of His own,[7] and whatever part of the natural life is given up on His account, is in His communion received again enhanced and glorified.[8] Every glance at the history of the kingdom of God causes us to see a wealth of individualities, which does not suffer the appearance of uniformity, and which plainly shows how God

[3] 1 Thess. iv. 3; Heb. xii. 14; 1 Pet. i. 15.
[4] Col. ii. 10a.
[5] 2 Cor. vii. 1.
[6] Acts ii. 14; Gal. ii. 11.
[7] Gal. iv. 19.
[8] Matt. x. 39.

even in the work of restoration respects the personality which He, in His creative power, called into existence.

4. The *relation* in which the life of sanctification stands to sin on the one hand, and to God's law on the other, has been already defined in principle by what has been said. No sanctification without conflict with every sin, and in every form in which the spiritually quickened vision discovers it; a conflict therefore constantly demanded in the Gospel, and sketched in a striking way by the Apostle, from his own experience, in Gal. v. 17, but not in Rom. vii. 14—24.[9] Where there is no thought of this conflict, and men continue to live peaceably with sin, there it may safely be said that the new principle of life as yet does not exist at all. The disgraceful assertion, that the flesh does not sin, and that thus the Christian need not seriously trouble himself about what are euphemistically called "the weaknesses of the flesh," rests upon a dualistic abstraction foreign to all psychology and experience. The flesh never sins, without the spirit becoming at the same time an accomplice, and again infected; the spirit cannot live, except it makes itself felt specially in opposition to the flesh. He who is really seeking after sanctification, wages the very heaviest warfare with that sin, to which flesh and blood show the strongest inclination.[10] Without any arbitrary limitation, the whole of the new life is placed by him under the law of the spirit; and as sanctification in its first period bears more of the character of *purification*, so it will in the second period, if it makes the desired progress, exhibit more the character of *development* after the highest example.—That example is given in the law of the Lord, which those in the way of sanctification fulfil willingly, completely, and without arbitrary distinction between greater and less commands, though not without continual failures.[11] By this faithfulness in little things, no less than in great, is the Christian character known; and true moral freedom is herein shown, that man becomes a servant of righteousness, who in accordance with his renewed principle cannot in the end do aught but fulfil the claims of his calling.[12] Hence the lasting import which the law of God, preserved for us in the Bible, has for the life of the Christian. Undoubtedly it is for

[9] With respect to Rom. vii. 14—24, we can only repeat what we have already adduced in the Theology of the New Testament (Eng. trans., 2nd edn., § 36, pp. 281—283),—we can only regret that the answer to the question, whether or not Paul is speaking here of the condition of the *Christian*, is still as ever considered by many as a criterion of orthodoxy or unorthodoxy. That the description in question continues still but too often *applicable* even to the Christian, no one will less deny than he himself; but that the apostle *intended* here to speak of himself as Christian, can only be maintained by one who entirely overlooks the sequence of the Epistle, and the connection of the argument. Every Christian may still recognise himself partially in this description of the man under the law, and that, indeed, because and in so far as he still is only a weak Christian; but that the Christian could and might still ever describe himself as in the full sense of the word "carnal" and "sold under sin" (ver. 14) contradicts equally the Apostle's line of argument (compare Rom. viii. 2) and constant mode of speech, as well as sound Christian experience, and leads in theory and practice to consequences which cannot be thought of without shuddering.

[10] Matt. xii. 43—50.

[11] Luke xi. 42a.

[12] Rom. vi. 18; Acts iv. 20.

him no longer the pedagogue to Christ, and he knows that he has been relieved from its curse through the reconciliation which has been made,[13] but this has been thus done in order that the claim of the law might now be fulfilled in him,[14] and that he should voluntarily do that which is no longer required of him by an external authoritative command. Hence the chief demand of the law presents to him the rule of his behaviour, and the mirror of a perfection, of which even with the best will he still but too often falls short; and it is a new proof of the healthy fresh spirit of the Reformation in the sixteenth century, that it, in opposition to all Antinomian idealism and realism continued thus to maintain with fitting emphasis this use of the law. "Tertius usus legis ad *renatos* pertinet, non quatenus justi, sed quatenus infirmitati adhuc obnoxii sunt" (*Form. Conc.*).

5. Thus, too, he who desires sanctification will apply himself to the different *duties* of godliness. Properly there is for the Christian but *one* duty, viz., "to be about his Father's business."[15] But that duty is varied according to the different objects with which it comes in contact; and so far is the usual division into duties, towards God, one's neighbour, and one's self, sufficiently justified, notwithstanding its weaker sides, even as these, too, are indirectly pointed out in Holy Scripture.[16] We must not, however, here overlook the fact that every Christian life has, too, its special duties, which demand an express investigation of God's will by and for every believer,[17] and that the fulfilment of each of these duties is in a peculiar way defined by the relation in which he stands to the Saviour, who specially demands from His disciples self-denying and active love,[18] manifested by obedience to every one of His commandments.[19] This is the soil from which the exercise of duty by the Christian is developed, as the fruits of a higher origin. Hence in its entirety it may be called an imitation of Christ (§ cxiii. 10), of which the many-sided claims may be traced back to the old, and yet new, command of holy Love in all its extent.

6. Thus it is evident, that the development of the true Christian life may be called at the same time an unlearning and a re-learning; aye, properly regarded, it is nothing less than the restoration of the original human life, which, without redemption, would in the end have been entirely lost through the power of sin. But it follows also from what has been said, that sanctification only gradually attains completion by different stages. As experience teaches that man can continue at a very low stage, and can even descend to a lower one, so it also proves, in agreement with Holy Scripture,[20] that, while justification takes place once for all,[21] sanctification on the other hand struggles on through different phases, often not without continual delays. This may be said of every Christian, who,

[13] Gal. iii. 13.
[14] Rom. iii. 31; viii. 3, 4.
[15] Luke ii. 49; John iv. 34.
[16] Micah vi. 8; Matt. xxii. 37—40; Rom. xiv. 17; Titus ii. 12.
[17] Ephes. v. 10.
[18] Matt. x. 37, 38.
[19] John xv. 14.
[20] 1 Cor. iii. 1; 2 Cor. iii. 18.
[21] Cor. vi. 10, 11.

in the case of normal development, later reaches a higher standpoint than before. What a difference, *e.g.*, do we see in Peter at the end, from what he was at the beginning of his life. But it is no less the case with different Christians, of whom one advances much further on the path of the new obedience than another, in consequence of different causes within, as well as without, himself.[22] Not all have a like disposition and capacity; not all make the same use of the same opportunity; not all, too, are called at the same time, and in all particulars, to the same thing. "Justification is an ideal unity, an act, done once for all, like baptism; sanctification is an endless variety, constantly repeating itself, like the feast of the Holy Supper. Justification is the principle of the new life, and as a principle, complete in itself; sanctification is the growth, the development of the new life, and consequently not complete before entrance into the heavenly inheritance. The contrast is as well defined as the growth of the root, and the formation of the fruit in the life of plants" (Lange). "Der Christ ist nicht im worden-*sein*, sondern im *werden*. Darum, wer ein Christ *ist*, der ist *kein* Christ" (Luther). Of every Christian, however, it may be demanded and expected, that he will unceasingly continue to strive after the higher, yea, even after the highest things.

7. The *limits* of the sanctification thus lie not on this, but on the other side of the grave. Rightly have the Confessions of the Reformation given a negative answer to the question, whether the Christian can become absolutely perfect here on earth (*Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 114), and have also shown that their standard of morality is thus much higher than that of the Romish and Greek Church, which declares the contrary. The doctrine that man can do more than can properly be required of him (§ cxix. 4) is indeed the veriest superficiality, and even the *Deificatio* and *Christificatio* of some of the Mystics belongs only to the domain of a disordered fancy, not to that of empirical reality. Though the Christian becomes in his degree a partaker of the Divine nature,[23] he does not lay aside the human, and the body of this death continues to the end the seat of the remaining sin. Therefore even the best man carries in himself the feeling of constant imperfection,[24] and even the Scriptures of the New Testament speak much more of sanctification (ἁγιασμός) than of holiness (ἁγιωσύνη or ἁγιότης) as the earthly task of the Christian. The butterfly grows, but never sets itself here below entirely free from the shell from which it comes out into view. Though in the moral domain one may advance much further than another, yet on this account the Evangelical Church does not recognise saints, in the sense in which the Romish Church, in consequence of Papal canonisation, thus calls some of the departed inhabitants of earth; even her most excellent members look only for the mercy of God unto eternal life.[25] First hereafter will the ideal of sanctification be attained, and even then always in such a manner that this attaining is an unending approach to the Divine perfection; for this reason, too, blissful, since that approach is at the same time the harmonious development of a force which is continually renewing itself.[26] "Regeneration fully completes itself only after

[22] Matt. xiii. 23; xix. 30; xx. 1—7.
[23] 2 Pet. i. 4.
[24] Phil. iii. 12—14.
[25] Jude 21.
[26] Isa. xl. 31.

death; when the spiritual body has actually been prepared, is Regeneration really for the first time completed" (Rothe).

Compare C. I. NITZSCH, *a. a. O.*, §§ 152—184; H. PLITT, *a. a. O.*, § 87; E. SARTORIUS, *a. a. O.*, iii., 1, p. 96, *sqq;* H. MARTENSEN, *Ethik* (1871), p. 333, *sqq.;* LANGE'S Art. *Heiligung*, in Herzog, *R. E.*, v., p. 679, *sqq.;* and also HARLESS, *Christian Ethics* (Eng. trans., T. and T. Clark), § 30, *sqq.;* A. WUTTKE, *Christl. Sittenl.*, 2nd edn., ii. (1865), § 201, *sqq.* Upon the importance of the law for Christian life, see CALVIN, *Instit.*, ii., 8. 1.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Metaphysical grounds for the highest ethical demands.—Conflict of the Romish and Protestant Church about the connection between justification and sanctification.—The educational (pædagogic) character of Saving Grace (Titus ii. 12).—What is the meaning of Col. iii. 1—4?—The union of freedom and service in the life of Christian sanctification.—Of whom does Paul speak in Rom. vii. 14—25?—Christian life and the world.—Genius and the commands of God.—To what extent can there be a conflict of duties?—Are there unconquerable sins?—How is it that it is impossible to become perfectly holy here on earth?—Lessing's "Grant me, Father, the left hand."*—Meaning and force of 1 John iii. 2, 3.

SECTION CXXI.—THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS.

Upon the way of the new obedience must all who believe persevere to the end, if Salvation in Christ is to become fully their possession. By constant exercise in all the duties of godliness, this perseverance, difficult though it be, can by no means be impossible to the true Christian. Faithful is He who calls, and He never makes a demand without at the same time giving the power thereto.

1. All which the Gospel requires from the citizen of the Kingdom of God is, as it were, crowned by the demand of perseverance. That this is actually demanded of every one who desires the inheritance of life, scarcely requires demonstration; utterances such as Matt. xxiv. 13, 1 Cor. xv. 58, 2 Pet. i. 10, Rev. iii. 11, abundantly show this. Equally plain does it appear that this demand may in itself be called perfectly *reasonable.* Of what good is the most promising beginning, if it is to remain always a beginning? and of whom may more be required, than of him who has received so much?[1] The possession of all the Christian virtues together cannot counterbalance the want of the one which is expressed by the Greek word ὑπομονή. Perseverance is the proof of the sincerity of the life of faith, the crown of the sanctification of life.

2. That, however, which is demanded with the fullest justice is not yet

* See Tholuck's *Hours of Devotion*, ch. lxvi.

[1] Luke xii. 48; 2 Pet. i. 3, 4.

on that account easy too; rather is it in many respects most *arduous*. The conflict and task of the Christian life, where these at least are apprehended in their full seriousness, by degrees become not only clearer, but also more wide and difficult. We only discover the height of the mount of perfection when we have really begun to make the ascent. There are deep-rooted sins of habit or temperament, which again and again become our masters, before we ourselves know or wish it. The more conscience is sharpened, the more is the eye too opened to smaller stains, and the new man sees himself again and again exposed to refined and more spiritual temptation (*e.g.*, pride), of which the old man knew not. No wonder that at the beginning of sanctification the feeling of inward misery and helplessness ofttimes does not decrease, but increase; men distrust themselves the more, in proportion as they learn to know themselves better. But no wonder, too, that the Gospel warns believers against unfaithfulness and apostasy, so expressly that we are indeed forced to believe here in the existence of a very real danger. Think of what it says of salt that has lost its savour,[2] of the cast-off branch,[3] of the apostate professor of the Gospel, who had yet tasted before of the heavenly gifts.[4] The fitness of this warning is illustrated by touching examples, such as that of Judas,[5] of Demas,[6] and of more than one of the churches of Asia Minor.[7]

3. Yet on the other side it cannot be doubted that the perseverance of the saints in the way of righteousness is psychologically *possible;* as a glance at the great crowd of witnesses in the Christian course surely proves.[8] Possible, however, only by the way of careful practice and prayerful use of the means of grace. In contrast with the false Asceticism, against which Paul had already given warning,[9] and of which the history of the Kingdom of God displays so many sad examples, stands a true, fitting, and lasting one, which cannot be urgently enough recommended to the Christian. There is a discipline of the spiritual life, the neglect of which is dangerous, and in the end fatal. Perseverance—it is too little regarded—is by no means a mere natural consequence of faith and repentance, but an earnest duty of the Christian, which is fulfilled only in the path of exertion and conflict. A slighting of the means of grace, which springs from a one-sided spiritualism, and is always accompanied with the want of deeper knowledge of self and of the Gospel, sooner or later punishes itself. The man in Christ needs—not abstinence, but strong meat, as the babe is fed with milk.[10] Without at this point entering further on the domain of Practice, we thus lay down in general this postulate, that watchfulness, prayer, and conflict, to which we are constantly called by the Gospel, are the *conditio sine quâ non* of all perseverance, and will remain so till the end. The ex-

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[2] Luke xiv. 34.
[3] John xv. 6.
[4] Heb. vi. 4—6; 2 Pet. ii. 20—22; 1 John v. 16.
[5] John xvii. 12.
[6] 2 Tim. iv. 10.
[7] Rev. ii. and iii.; compare also Luke viii. 13b.
[8] Heb. xii. 1.
[9] 1 Tim. iv. 7, 8.
[10] Heb. v. 12—14.

amples of David, Peter, and many others show sufficiently the effect of negligence even in the most excellent.

4. Under this condition, however, the perseverance, or, better, the preservation, of the saints is *guaranteed* upon the most certain grounds.—Already does the nature of the case make us see that this may be with confidence expected. For the Christian is born again, not of corruptible, but of incorruptible seed;[11] and it is scarcely conceivable, that true life from God should so utterly perish, that one should be on a par with him who had never possessed it. Living faith overcomes the world,[12] not merely around, but also in us, and even in that little world the leaven cannot possibly rest till the meal is entirely leavened.[13]—This truth, too, is then actually announced by the Lord and His Apostles in different ways. "If it were possible," the false Christs would deceive even the elect;[14] but this is plainly impossible, according to the words of Him who is the Truth itself. The Good Shepherd will not permit that any should take His sheep out of His hand, or that of His Father.[15] Where the good work has been begun, there is also every reason to be confident that it will certainly be completed.[16] He who is born of God does not commit sin, for His seed remaineth in him;[17] they who go out from the Church of the faithful, already show thereby that they have never truly belonged to it.[18] The firm ground for Christian security in this respect lies in the faithfulness of God, whose gifts of grace and calling are absolutely without repentance, and by whose power His own are preserved through faith.[19] Striking examples of this truth are continually to be met with in all who, though they have stumbled much, have kept the faith, and received the crown of life.[20]

5. It already appears on which side we range ourselves in the strife on this point, which the Reformed Church has waged since the seventeenth century against the Romish and Lutheran, and which has also been the cause of the separation between the Remonstrants and Contra-Remonstrants. It is the question, whether there is reason to expect that the Christian will really through God's grace persevere in the faith, or whether it is possible that the redeemed of the Lord may still entirely fall away, and consequently perish finally. This question must, according to our sincerest conviction, be affirmatively answered, not in the latter, but in the former sense. It is entirely in unison with Scripture and experience, when the believer confesses that "he *is* a living member of the Church of Christ, and will also *continue* so for ever" (*Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 54); and not without reason was the fifth Article, of the Perseverance of the Saints, defended at the Synod of Dordt with such warmth against the Arminians. It is here plainly not the question, What is to be expected on the human side? "*Perseverantiam sanctorum docet ecclesia Reformata non ob fidei virtutem, et fortitudinem, et dignitatem*" (Coccejus). The question is, what may be hoped from God's faithfulness and grace, the operations of which will be still further discussed in the following section, but which are here presupposed

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[11] 1 Pet. i. 23.
[12] 1 John v. 4.
[13] Matt. xiii. 33.
[14] Matt. xxiv. 24.
[15] John x. 28—30.
[16] Phil. i. 6.
[17] 1 John iii. 9.
[18] 1 John ii. 19.
[19] Isa. liv. 10; Jer. xxxi. 3; Rom. xi. 29.
[20] 2 Tim. iv. 8.

and recognised. "An actual falling away of the really converted, an *actual* dropping away again of the same from the (*actual*) condition of grace, is impossible" (Rothe).

6. We do not in so saying absolutely deny that the perseverance here meant may actually for a time be very seriously *threatened*. Even in the regenerate heart lie perhaps hidden depths of Satan, from which the indwelling corruption breaks out sometimes with a force and violence, which seems almost inconceivable to ourselves and others. "By such gross sins they insult God, render themselves liable to death, grieve the Holy Spirit, do away with the exercise of faith, wound the conscience very severely, and lose not seldom the feeling of grace, for a time" (*Can. Dord.*, v. 5). If only they might enter into life, who had never grieved or resisted the Holy Ghost, not one would be saved. But all this does not yet prove that true believers should be able so to resist and grieve the Holy Ghost, that they must perish totally and finally (*totaliter et finaliter*). The sin against the Holy Ghost[21] is not a sin which can be expected in the really regenerate. Failure for a time, however sad in itself, belongs in the Christian to the circumference, and not to the inmost centre of spiritual life. By progress in sanctification the danger of such a failure becomes gradually less, till at length the possibility, at least of some sins, disappears almost entirely. Certainly, relative danger will always continue to exist, until the last fetter is loosed; but even here the words retain their eternal truth, "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world."[22] By the power of God the Christian is preserved, but preserved *through his own faith*.[23]

7. Thus presented, the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints can satisfactorily maintain itself against the various *objections* which are constantly alleged against it. True, the *warnings* against apostasy, contained in Holy Scripture, are manifold and earnest. They point to a danger which exists on the part of man, and show that it is possible to possess and to experience very much that is Christian, without being in truth a new creature in Christ.[24] "To trembling Christians, conscious of their own weakness, the Scriptures cry, God is faithful; to fickle Christians, Be ye faithful. There is nothing to justify our weakening the force of these latter passages" (Ebrard). On the other hand, however, the warning itself may and must become the means for preserving the Christian from a dangerous precipice, and it is from time to time accompanied by a complete assurance of the unchangeable faithfulness of God and Christ.[25] —*Examples* of apostasy are undoubtedly to be found, but we ask in vain for proof that the apostates, of whom the Bible speaks, were real believers. John at least plainly asserts the contrary;[26] Demas[27] may without difficulty be numbered among those temporary companions of Paul who yet were not necessarily on that account friends of Jesus; and Judas[28] was given indeed to the Lord as an Apostle, but was nevertheless destined to perdition, because he was no true disciple, but rather a devil.[29] The

[21] Matt. xii. 31, 32.
[22] 1 John iv. 4; 1 Cor. x. 13; 1 Thess. v. 24.
[23] 1 Pet. i. 5.
[24] Heb. vi. 4—6.
[25] Luke xxii. 31, 32; 1 Cor. i. 8.
[26] 1 John ii. 19.
[27] 2 Tim. iv. 10.
[28] John xvii. 12.
[29] John vi. 70.

Galatians, of whom Paul speaks as falling away,[30] and the false teachers mentioned by Peter,[31] even if it be assumed that they really continued in their apostasy, had certainly never really gained the standpoint of Paul or Peter; rather is it true of such, "Whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath,"[32] because, namely, he has never rightly possessed it. Thus we have seen even in our day highly gifted theologians break away from Apostolic Christianity, and fall into Naturalism and Pantheism, even though they had previously been Apologists of a Christian belief in revelation, at that time, as it seemed, accepted by them with full conviction. True gold alone stands permanently the most severe test.—Finally, as regards the possible abuse of this doctrine in the way of carelessness and sin, this follows in no slight degree from a mistaken presentation of it. Neither Scripture nor Confession teaches that the believer, "even though he fall premeditatedly into great, gross, terrible sins," is nevertheless preserved to eternal life at any cost, and as it were against his own will. Indeed, whosoever thus sins shows that he never was a true believer,[33] since the believer rather purifies himself, even as He, who has called him, is pure. "So far removed is this certainty of the perseverance of true believers from making men proud and carnally at ease, that it is on the contrary the true root of humility, childlike fear, true godliness, patience under every conflict, ardent prayers, constancy under the cross and in the confession of the truth, and a well-grounded joy in God; and the consideration of this benefit is an incentive to an earnest and continued exercise of gratitude and good works" (*Can. Dord.*, v. 12). If abuse of the best and even holiest still continues possible, it cannot be resisted better than when the doctrine of perseverance is not separated from, but most closely connected on one hand with, that of Christian sanctification, but also on the other with that of God's holiness, power, and faithfulness, which continues here the ultimate ground for all certainty of belief. Thus far we have attempted the first; we now pass over to the second. From command to prayer even here is but a step.

Compare SCHWEITZER, *a. a. O.*, § 109; A. EBRARD, *a. a. O.*, §§ 512—515; LANGE, *a. a. O.*, § 95, *sqq;* also the *Canons of Dordt*, ch. v., and G. MOLENKAMP, *Specimen, quo inquiritur in N. T. doctrinam de perseverantiâ q. d. sanctorum* (1859); N. BEETS, *Wat mogelijk, en wat onmogelijk is* (Sticht. Uren, v., p. 252, *sqq.*).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

What is the sense of Heb. xii. 1, 2?—What means put the Christian in a state to continue in the faith unto the end?—Meaning of Heb. vi. 4—6.—History of the controversy as to the perseverance of the saints.—Difference between a mechanical and psychological presentation and defence of the dogma.—Closer testing of the chief objections.—How can we explain this dogma, and how best obviate its abuse?

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[30] Gal. iii. 3.
[31] 2 Pet. ii. 1.
[32] Matt. xiii. 12.
[33] 1 John iii. 9.

SECOND DIVISION.

THE WORK OF GRACE.

SECTION CXXII.—NECESSITY OF THE OPERATION OF GRACE.

No true spiritual good is brought about in any sinner, without the power of the grace of God, who works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. It is more definitely the Holy Ghost, who, according to the testimony of Scripture and experience, is the efficient cause of all spiritual life. The absolute necessity of this Divine operation of grace follows from the condition in which man is by nature ; has been at all times unequivocally recognised by those who have advanced furthest in the knowledge of self, of man, and of the Gospel ; and requires, especially in our day, to be continually elucidated, and maintained against different kinds of misconception and contradiction.

1. We have been made acquainted with the demand of the Gospel, and must unconditionally admit its justice. But now the question, How is it possible to attain to the height thus pointed out ? cannot longer be deferred. The conclusion of the preceding part has already led us over the boundary of the present investigation. Hitherto we have viewed the way of salvation principally from the side of man, now we must become acquainted with it specially from the side of God. The Metaphysical investigation must as far as possible explain and complete the Anthropological.

2. The *idea* which we must form in general of the work of the grace of God, is already given to a certain degree in that word itself. We comprehend in it all which God is continually doing to make the sinner personally a participator in the salvation in Christ. The word grace (gratia, χάρις, חֶסֶד), so frequently used in Holy Scripture, denotes in general favour, pity, unconditioned goodness on the part of the greater to the less ; here the saving love of God towards sinners, entirely undeserving of it as such. Generally, everything which God gives to sinners may be called a Divine token of grace. We think, however, more specially of all which God has done and is doing in Christ for the salvation of a sinful world (χάρις σωτήριος, *gratia salutaris*, Tit. ii. 11). But in the most special sense is now here denoted that grace which makes the heart of the sinner its abode and working-place, destroys there the power of sin, and entirely renews and restores him after the image of God (*Gratia applicatrix, seu medicinalis*). That Holy

Scripture even in this sense speaks often of the grace of God is known, and is made evident, *e.g.*, from such passages as Phil. i. 29; 1 Cor. xv. 10; Eph. ii. 4—7. This grace, given, not to all men alike, but to some men bounteously, thus stands from its nature in contrast on one side with all *merit*,[1] but also on the other with everything which is the fruit and token of man's *nature* corrupted by sin.[2] It is specially this last antithesis, that, viz., of flesh and blood against that which God works in us,[3] which must here be more closely discussed; even as it has obtained, particularly since the time of Augustine, a special place in the treatment of Christian doctrine.

3. It is indeed the continuous teaching of Holy Scripture, supported by the evidence of the spiritual experience of life, that true spiritual good, accomplished by any sinner, must by no means be regarded as the fruit of his own heart. It is true, the sacred men of God are free from that later onesidedness which condemned with one stroke of the pen, as "splendid sins," any laudable acts which illustrious heathen had done. Paul recognises a claim of the law, written in the heart of the heathen,[4] and Cornelius is assured of God's relative good pleasure in his devout efforts even before his conversion.[5] But nowhere does the Gospel teach that man already, just as he is, is fitted for the Kingdom of God; everywhere does it teach us to view in the new life of the sinner the fruit of a special grace internally revealed and received.[6] Hence, too, this grace is constantly invoked as the highest gift for the Church, particularly by Peter and Paul, in whom indeed the consciousness of sin was most strong. The Lord, in whom this consciousness was naturally wanting, uses the Greek word only once, in a different sense,[7] but the thing itself is in no way wanting in His teaching. He, too, calls *the being saved* on the part of man impossible,[8] declares the Holy Ghost to be the highest and best gift of the Father,[9] and requires birth by water and Spirit as absolutely indispensable for the citizen of the Kingdom of God.[10] We can therefore surely say that the truth, concering which we are about to speak, is *par excellence* Christian. If from the Gentile standpoint it was the universal conviction that men might ask for success from the gods, but must acquire virtue itself by the exercise of their own strength; the Christian, on the other hand, unconditionally confesses, even with respect to his spiritual life, "He that built all things is God."[11]

4. If, in order to gain a still fuller knowledge of the *origin* of this operation of grace, we consult Holy Scripture, it becomes evident to us that there it is sometimes generally ascribed to God,[12] to the Father,[13] to Jesus Christ, too, the glorified Lord of the Church,[14] but usually and mostly, to the Holy Ghost, who, already promised and looked for under the Old Covenant, has in the days of the New Dispensation been amply and for ever poured out,[15] and, according to Jesus' own teaching, is the Author of the true birth of God,[16] the Comforter, by whose mighty influence the world

[1] Rom. iii. 24.
[2] Ephes. ii. 8.
[3] Matt. xvi. 17.
[4] Rom. ii. 15
[5] Acts x. 2.
[6] 2 Cor. vi. 1; John i. 16.
[7] Luke vi. 32—34; xvii. 9.
[8] Matt. xix. 26.
[9] Luke xi. 13.
[10] John iii. 5, 6.
[11] Heb. iii. 4; 1 Cor. i. 31.
[12] 1 Cor. iii. 7.
[13] Col. i. 12.
[14] Acts ii. 47.
[15] John vii. 39.
[16] John iii. 5.

is convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.[17] According to that of Paul, without Him it is impossible to confess Jesus as the Lord,[18] and His blessed influence is the very first want of the Church.[19] Thus we speak in the spirit of Scripture when, in discussing the operation of grace, we think not indeed exclusively, but still primarily, of the operation of the Holy Ghost in illuminating, comforting, and sanctifying the sinner. As the Son of God is the centre of the revelation of God to men, so certainly is the Holy Ghost the source of the life-quickening power of God in the sinner. (Cf. § liii.). This is the constant teaching of the Gospel,[20] and the nature of the case, as well as Christian experience, gives evidence to this truth. He who is the origin of all natural life[21] can, will, and must be the cause of spiritual life too. No Christian who possesses spiritual life will end by glorying in himself, and he who understands the truth has at the same time the assurance that God has taught him to understand it *through the Spirit.* Not incorrectly, therefore, did the older Theologians speak, in distinction from the threefold office of Christ, and having regard to particular passages of Scripture,[22] of a threefold or fourfold office (*munus*) of the Holy Ghost, employed in the reproof, instruction, education, and consolation of the sinner; though we must here specially take care not to separate that which is both metaphysically and empirically most closely united.

5. The *necessity* of this operation of grace is the natural consequence of the condition into which man is brought by sin (§ lxxvii.). Under its dominion he is deprived of the true light, the best comfort, the moral power which he requires, and he himself cannot supply what is wanting. What profits it that the sun shines in all its splendour, if the eye is not open to its beams? Of what good is it to say that a way of salvation is opened, so long as the will is not inclined truly to walk in that way? and again, what avails the will without sufficient power to fulfil the will? Certainly, where the power of sin is denied, an operation of the grace of God to produce faith and repentance is the most unnecessary thing in the world, and from its own standpoint Rationalism is quite logical when it declares, "Omnis de Gratiâ disputatio rectius ad doctrinam de Providentiâ refertur" (Wegscheider). A Pelagian anthropology inevitably leads to the ignoring of Evangelical Pneumatology. He, however, who has made a closer examination of himself, and has ever seriously tried to amend himself by his own power, will have recognised the hopelessness of the attempt, and at the same time the absolute indispensability of a higher power for his spiritual renewal.[23] No wonder that this indispensability has in every age been confessed in varied forms before God and man. Well known are the words of Cicero, "Nemo vir bonus sine aliquo afflatu divino unquam fuit." In Israel we listen to the wish of Moses,[24] the prayer of David,[25] the predictions of the prophets concerning the gift of the Holy Ghost,[26] as the fulfilling of the greatest want. From the heart of a Paul, an Augustine, a Thomas à Kempis, a Luther,

[17] John xvi. 8—11.
[18] 1 Cor. xii. 3.
[19] Eph. i. 17, 18; iii. 16; 2 Cor. xiii. 14.
[20] John vi. 63; 1 Cor. vi. 11.
[21] Gen. i. 2.
[22] John xvi. 8; 2 Tim. iii. 16.
[23] Jer. xiii. 23.
[24] Num. xi. 29.
[25] Ps. li. 12, 13; comp. cxliii. 10.
[26] Jer. xxxi. 31—34; Joel ii. 28, 29; Ezek. xxxvi. 36, 37.

we catch the echo of no different notes, and even in the strains of poesy the same truth is in varied ways displayed. This is seen, *e.g.*, in the La Grâce of L. Racine, in some of the Church's hymns, which are the expression of the profoundest experience of spiritual life; and if we take account of our own experience, we shall think twice before we reject the confession of the Netherlands Church on this point, in the *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 8 and 65, *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxii. and xxiv., as a result of exaggeration and misconception. It is not knowledge, but ignorance, which rejects the operation of the Holy Ghost in the intellect and heart of the sinner.

6. Thoroughly convinced of the necessity of this operation, we do not allow ourselves to be kept back from its investigation by the number of *objections* which are alleged against this part, too, of the doctrine of salvation.—The whole idea of a special operation of grace is often considered *unfounded*, because the natural good, too, which exists in man, or is given to him, may be called a gift of grace. The words, "everything is grace," are often used and understood in such a sense, that in the end nothing any longer is grace in the real sense of the word. With the apparent tendency in our days to efface more and more the lines of demarcation between the natural and the supranatural, we must the more maintain the distinction between such mercies as God bounteously grants to all, and those gifts of His grace which He bestows only on believers in the Gospel, and on these in very different degree. Every good gift comes from above, but the activity of the Holy Ghost has yet its peculiar sphere; and between those who are, and those who are not, enlightened and renewed by this Spirit, exists a distinction, which can as little be denied, as explained in a merely natural manner.—Yea, utterly *impossible* must every operation of grace be deemed by him who consistently remains at a Deistic or Pantheistic standpoint, which can tolerate no revelation or miracle whatever. But from the standpoint of Christian Theism, no thoughtful mind need consider it an absurdity, that the Father of spirits Himself works mediately, but still directly, upon the spirit and heart of the sinner, whom as Creator He formed, and whom He, as re-Creator, will renew after His own image. If, according to the saying of a Christian thinker (Lange), "Grace is the victory of Divine love over human resistance in an ethical form," we do not see what objections can rightly be alleged against the possibility of its operation, so long at least as the freedom of God, the spiritual nature of man, and the reality of the relation of the one to the other is recognised.—Or again, ought such operations of grace, even though possible, yet to be thought wholly *indiscernible?* and for this reason should all investigation here be utterly useless? It is asserted, and so far certainly with right, that we do not possess within ourselves an infallible criterion for immediately distinguishing in each individual case the voice of God from that of our own consciousness. Who in the domain of the inner life will lay down with unerring hand the boundary between the one and the other? The well-known saying, Πάντα θεῖα καὶ ἀνθρώπινα πάντα, is here, too, of great import, and the danger of self-deceit more than imaginary. On the other hand, however, we must remember that there exists at least one infallible mark of the work of grace, that, we mean, which is found in its fruits. He who is not without experience of his own heart, as well as that of others, knows too that there

are things which are learned not of flesh and blood, but only of a higher teaching. "The grace of God is a kind of thing, very great and strong, powerful and active; it does not lie down sleeping in the soul, as some of these fancy-preachers dream, nor is it carried about as a painted board carries its colours. No, by no means; it is *that grace*, which carries, and drives, and operates, and works everything in man, and makes itself both felt and experienced. *It* is concealed, but its works never; work and word show where it is, as the fruit and leaves of the tree tell us its kind and nature" (Luther).—*Humiliating*, it is true, is this doctrine in a certain sense, and mortifying to a proud self-sufficiency; yet the first question here is not, Is this pleasant and flattering? but has it sufficient ground in the word of God and the experience of life? and if so, then undoubtedly a wholesome humiliation is infinitely preferable to a dangerous self-deception.—Lastly, if the whole of this dogma is deemed *pernicious* on account of the manifold abuse which has in different ways been made of it, then in turn is evoked from us the question, whether this abuse is not perhaps the consequence of the inaccurate presentation, conception, and application of a truth in itself undeniable, and the disavowal of which would lead to a danger as great, and even still greater.

7. For us, at least, the answer to these questions cannot be uncertain; and far from thinking that we are here moving in a circle of obsolete and impractical ideas, we consider a renewed examination also of this side of Christian truth, particularly in our day, of indisputable *importance*, as well for every Christian who is really concerned about the work of his renewal, as specially for the minister of the Gospel, who sees himself directed here to the indispensable, but also victorious, Ally in his spiritual conflict. "I believe in the Holy Ghost:" what would become of the Kingdom of God in its narrower and wider sphere if that part of the creed stood less immovably firm than that concerning the Son or the Father? Certainly, it is specially a question of experiencing the operation of the Holy Ghost; and already at starting we feel at once that we are about to enter on an extremely mysterious domain. But still, our vocation to know as far as possible the things which are given us of God in Christ is here as indisputable as it is glorious. The denial of the doctrine of the operation of the grace of the Holy Spirit must lead in theory to a barren Deism,—in practice, to the comfortless doctrine of our own ability, with all its mournful consequences. Once more, against the known efforts of the day to efface the border-line between the holy and the profane, the natural and the supranatural, it must, specially from the Christian Reformed standpoint, be most earnestly maintained—yea, even be proclaimed from the house-tops—that "the task of Theology at the present time in Christendom is to vindicate the supranatural in the strongest sense of the word, but with the unconditional exclusion of the magical" (Rothe). We believe we shall best accomplish our task by asking *first*, what does the grace of God effect in the sinner; *then*, how it works; and, *finally*, in what connection its activity stands to the activity and freedom of man.

Compare, on the import of the word "Grace," N. BEETS, in the *Jahrb. v. W. Th.*, 1853, p. 387, *sqq.*; upon the thing itself, SPENER, *Von der Natur und Gnade* (1863);

STORR, *De Spiritûs sancti in mentibus nostris efficientiâ* (1779); the prize Essays of G. W. SEMLER and S. K. THODEN VAN VELZEN, *Over de voortdurende werking des H. G.*, in the works of the Hague Society (1842), with the literature so abundantly supplied there; and specially LANGE'S article *Gnade*, in Herzog, *R. E.*, v. (1856).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Since what time has the doctrine of the operation of grace been more expressly treated? and what points of special mark are seen in the course of its history?—Is it accurate to regard Divine Grace exclusively or chiefly as remission of punishment?—Is there sufficient ground for speaking on this domain of a proper activity of the Holy Ghost, distinct from that of the Son and the Father?—The meaning of John iii. 5—8.—To what extent can we speak of the operation of grace already in the days of the Old Covenant? and in what is this distinguished from the same activity under the New Dispensation?—Nearer indication of the difficulty, but also of the possibility, of discerning as such the operation of the grace of God with sufficient certainty.—Close connection of this doctrine with our humiliation, consolation, and sanctification.

SECTION CXXIII.—ITS EXTENT.

The extent of the Divine operation of Grace extends over the whole of the internal and external life of the man, the sinner, the Christian. Only through its influence is the commencement of the spiritual life explained, its growth promoted, its completion fully guaranteed. We have thus to speak, first, of preparing, secondly of redeeming, thirdly of preserving and all-conquering Grace.

1. Not incorrectly has some one called the grace of God in Christ the morning and evening sun of the Christian life. Prepared to observe its extent more nearly, we cannot do better than watch the development of that life by the light of the revelation of this grace. We must here, however, at once observe that the distinction, which for clearness' sake we make between different operations of the grace of God, ought not to be considered as as harp separation, still less as an opposition, between the one and the other side of this activity. Here rather something similar occurs to that which was noticed in connection with the doctrine of the attributes of God; even where the light of the highest perfection breaks into different colours in our sight, perfection itself is inseparably and unchangeably one. So it is and ever remains one and the same grace, which manifests itself at different degrees and stages of the human and Christian life, but the variety of its operations renders a separate observation of the riches of its gifts necessary. Without entering on an extended criticism of the views of others, or mentioning the countless divisions and subdivisions in this domain in earlier times, we simply follow the historical line we have indicated. The same subjects which were discussed in the preceding sections, will naturally be partially discussed here, but now they will be regarded from another point of view.

2. Already the beginning of spiritual life, as Scripture and experience jointly testify, can be explained solely by the salutary operation of the grace of God. Man does not begin on his part to seek after God; but God graciously seeks and calls man, who is to become the subject of His kingdom. We must here refer to what has been already said respecting predestination to eternal life (§ lxxxi.); but as we now cast a further glance on the guidance and experience of the sinner, in whom the Divine plan of salvation has been entirely realised, we see a chain consisting of various links, but all bearing the stamp of God's grace. This we discover at once in the first, the *preparing grace* (gratia præveniens), whose work has with full right been more closely observed by the later rather than by the earlier Dogmatics. To its domain we bring everything which leads the way to the commencement of the new life in the microcosm within the soul, or which in any degree promotes that commencement. The Lord Himself declares that no one can come unto Him except the Father draw him.[1] Where men really come to Him, they come in consequence of this gracious drawing, which is internally experienced, understood, and obeyed. Whoever looks back on the first beginnings of his spiritual life, cannot any longer with equal *clearness* distinguish all details; the first germ of life remains for him a mystery, the anatomist cannot dissect it, only the physiologist can to a certain extent perceive it. This, however, is at once evident, that impressions, occurrences, experiences, entirely or partially independent of our own will, have co operated, and bring us *there*, where we are only unwillingly brought, and have first found Christ. Many external and internal difficulties stood in the way of the surrender to, the communion with, and the life for, Him; we ourselves best know that when these were removed, the removal was not effected by our wisdom or power. We have not convinced ourselves of sin, that has the Spirit of truth done;[2] we have not of ourselves thirsted and hungered after the salvation in Christ, but a higher power, which was mindful of our good, has caused the hitherto unknown feeling of an imperative need to speak within us. Well might Paul, with all believers, thank the Father, who "had made them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."[3] From first to last His grace must obtain the honour of every personal participation in salvation through Christ.

3. The *Calling* of the sinner to the blessings of the kingdom of God is more specially to be ascribed to this grace of God. Rightly presented in Holy Scripture as one of the greatest gifts,[4] it may in a certain sense be called the transition between Preparing and Redeeming grace. When the field is sufficiently prepared, the heavenly Husbandman sows the seed, which must bring forth imperishable fruit. With reason does Dogmatics teach us to distinguish a general, or external, from the special, or internal, calling of God. The first is that which is made by God to every one, and is so undoubtedly seriously meant and so emphatic, that no one who lives under the preaching of the Gospel can excuse his disobedience. To establish this latter statement, and at the same time the earnest will of

[1] John vi. 44.
[2] John xvi. 8.
[3] Col. i. 12.
[4] 1 Cor. i. 9; 2 Pet. i. 3.

God for the salvation of the sinner, an earlier Dogmatics has laid great stress upon the fact that this calling in principle came to all men in and through Adam, Noah, and the Apostles of the Lord;[5] even as a Lutheran theologian of our days, who died not long since (Löhe,) for the sake of his system asserted that the Gospel was preached in America by some of the Apostles. It is, however, self-evident that a vague report of revelation, in so far as it might have reached to some individuals, cannot be considered a *calling* in the proper sense of the word. Whoever, therefore, for dogmatic reasons considers it desirable to maintain the absolute universality of the Divine calling, will do well to look less to the past than to the future, and in this case specially to think of the destination of Christianity as the religion of the world.

From this general grace, however, is well distinguished that special grace of which the Apostle speaks, *inter alia*, in the words, "whom He did predestinate, them He also called."[6] By this he means the privilege of the man in whom this calling has found such an echo, that it has become in him truth and life. Certainly, the Master of the house compels all to come in, but not a few continue to excuse themselves.[7] Where, however, that resistance yields, and the heart has really become willing, there Scripture and experience teach us to recognise in that happy change a work of grace. Even that internal receptivity of the spirit, in consequence of which it readily accepts what others reject, did not begin without its blessed influence. It is the Lord who not only brings Lydia, apparently by accident, into communication with Paul, but also opens her heart to attend to his words.[8] But if her heart, why not also at the same time those of others? Even when we assume that in these last, in consequence surely of their own fault, the necessary receptivity was wanting, we can but give this answer, "Habet Deus suas horas et moras." The calling to the Kingdom of God has its seasons and hours;[9] but if it be understood and obeyed, it is because a higher Ephphatha was heard in the heart.[10] "Awakening is a visitation of the Spirit with the mighty call of grace" (Martensen). The words of resurrection sound loudly over every depth of sin,[11] but there is no true proper act of resurrection without the same life-quickening power of God which once raised Christ from the dead.[12] We do not speak here of any mechanical compulsion, but yet of an operation of God which happens just to one sinner, as distinguished from another sinner, and makes him experience "the mighty impulse to an eternal motion." The time, the manner, and the means of such an operation present to us the unlimited spectacle of a boundless and glorious variety. Compare from this point of view the history of Paul, of Cornelius, of Lydia, and the Gaoler, of Justin and Augustine, of Luther and Calvin, of Spener and Zinzendorf, and we shall have abundance of material for speaking of the "movements of Supreme wisdom" even in the domain of the spiritual world. To this extent the "gratia particularis" may at the same time be called a striking example of the "Providentia specialissima." It is as mistaken to call such leadings merely imaginary, as to consider them equally

[5] Rom. x. 18. Rom. viii. 30. Luke xiv. 18—23.
[6] Acts xvi. 14.
[7] Matt. xx. 1—7.
[8] Mark vii. 34.
[9] Eph. v. 14.
[10] Eph. i. 19, 20.

necessary for, and recognisable in all. One person is led by difficult ways, another by easy paths to the same goal. But enough; where not merely a passing desire, but the real will, is brought into operation, so that the germ and force of the action well pleasing to God is called into being, there must we with solemn thanksgiving recognise a proper work of God.[13]

4. Not less do we welcome a revelation of the same power where the preparing grace has now passed entirely into the redeeming, and this again soon advances in different stages. Of these the first is the *enlightening* (φωτισμός, illuminatio) which has already partially preceded, and is partially a necessary consequence of, the beginning of this outward calling. It is that operation of the Holy Spirit by which the sinner is brought primarily and successively to a clearer knowledge of the truth in Christ. Even here it is the Lord who has made both "the seeing eye and the hearing ear."[14] Nor may we call this operation of grace superfluous, since the sinner indeed remains a rational and moral creature. Immense is the difference between an intellectual knowledge and a real experience of the truth, which maketh wise unto salvation. Compared with this last, with which however we are not exclusively concerned now, even the former partial knowledge may be called a knowledge, which is as yet not knowledge,[15] because it is a fruit of a higher revelation of the Spirit.[16] It is this higher enlightening through which the Apostles were enabled to preach the Gospel,[17] but which is at the same time in its own degree the privilege of all believers. The distinction between that which the world calls enlightening, and that which may be so distinguished as the gift of the Spirit, is revealed afresh on every comparison. The last is exclusively the source of that living and fruitful experience, both of the Law and the Gospel, by which even the child learns to understand what is concealed from him who is wise and prudent in his own sight.[18] He who truly believes becomes consequently in the spiritual domain he who knows, the γνωστικός *par excellence*, who distinguishes truth from error with exact tact, and needs not that any should teach him.[19] What falls to his lot is not merely an external irradiation by the sun of the Gospel, as of a wall which reflects the light without receiving it itself (alluminatio), but an inward penetration by that light, which is one with the true life [20] (illuminatio). It has naturally its different degrees, both as to the extent as well as the accuracy and clearness of the knowledge. Usually indeed it takes place gradually, even as this is strikingly described in the sacred narrative (Mark viii. 22—26). It may even be lost for a time through one's own fault, because the eye of the soul becomes diseased, and requires renewed healing by the heavenly Physician.[21] Even more, there is a relative enlightening, which is not preserved from the danger of apostasy and rejection.[22] Where, however, the gift is faithfully preserved and used, it becomes at the same time a type and prophecy of the hour when Christian faith and knowledge will be exchanged for beatific sight.[23]

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[13] Phil. ii. 13.
[14] Prov. xx. 12.
[15] John i. 31.
[16] Matt. xvi. 17.
[17] 2 Cor. iv. 6.
[18] Matt. xi. 25, 26.
[19] 1 John ii. 20, 27; comp. 1 Cor. ii. 15.
[20] John i. 11.
[21] Matt. vi. 23; Rev. iii. 18.
[22] Heb. vi. 4—6.
[23] 1 Cor. xiii. 12; 2 Cor. v. 7.

5. Sin at least need no longer stand in the way of the realisation of this prospect. "Whom God hath called, him hath He also justified." *Justification* (justificatio, δικαίωσις) is that operation of the Spirit of God by which He delivers the sinner from the guilt and punishment of sin, and restores him to His favour and friendship. After what has already been said in § cxi. concerning this Saving Benefit, we may now be relatively brief. But we must not lose sight here, in opposition to the mistaken view of the Romish Church, of the distinction between justification and sanctification, and the first must be definitely conceived as that judicial action of God (actio *forensis*), by which He imputes to the true believer the perfect righteousness of Christ. The word must be understood, not in its physical sense, as if the righteousness and holiness of Christ was as it were infused into his own (justitia *infusa*), but in its metaphysical sense; so that God looks upon and accepts the sinner, notwithstanding his absolute unworthiness, in Christ, who is before God his only righteousness. He who thus justifies the sinner (ὁ δικαιῶν) is God alone, according to the riches of His grace; by that justification itself (δικαίωσις), from the nature of the case, the (negative) discharge from the guilt of sin is accompanied with the (positive) restoration into the bliss of communion with God, and the condition into which he who is pardoned is consequently brought (δικαιοσύνη) is nothing less than a state of moral rectitude before God. From the standpoint of Naturalism this entire doctrine is naturally the veriest absurdity; and in our day this Gospel is proclaimed to the sinner, that "when men speak of forgiveness of sins they return twenty centuries back." From the Evangelical Reformed standpoint, on the contrary, it is the crown and kernel of all the benefits of God, and the subject of an everlasting song of triumph.[24]—We bring it here once more forward, because the grace of God is not merely the source of redemption itself, but very evidently also the cause of that saving faith which makes us partakers of Christ, and of His atonement. Here, too, the voice of Christian experience again falls in with that of the Scriptures of the New Testament,[25] and of the Confessions of the Church (*Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 65; *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxiv.), "We are saved by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God."[26] Nor does it militate against this, that in some passages of Holy Scripture the reception of the Holy Ghost is described as the fruit of faith,[27] because we speak here of the *gift* of the Holy Ghost, which must be properly distinguished from the Giver Himself; and the faith, in consequence of which we receive this inestimable gift, is and ever remains a Divine gift of grace. If only proper distinctions and definitions be made, the Holy Ghost may as well be described as alike Author and fruit of saving faith. In accordance with Scripture we may definitely ascribe to Him that intimate union (*unio mystica*) of believers with the Lord and one another, by which they become one body with Him.[28] It is self-evident that we do not speak here of a union in a pantheistic sense, but still of such a close connection,

[24] Rom. viii. 33.
[25] Phil. i. 29; 1 Cor. xii. 3, 9; 2 Cor. iv. 13; Gal. v. 22; Ephes. iii. 16, 17.
[26] Ephes. ii. 8.
[27] Acts ii. 38; Gal. iii. 2; Ephes. i. 13.
[28] 1 Cor. vi. 17; Ephes. iv. 4.

that Christ may be said to dwell in His own people, and to work in them by His life-quickening power, because they together with Him are animated by one Spirit.

6. Where, in consequence of this inner consciousness of life, the justification of the sinner by grace is a fact brought about objectively and subjectively, there again is produced from the same source another benefit, the *Sanctification* of the redeemed. Sanctification (*sanctificatio*, ἁγιασμός), is the work of the grace of God, which purifies the believer more and more from sin, and renews him after the image of Christ. We have already in § cxx. gained a knowledge of the demand of sanctification in its entire force; but it is far from being the case, that the fulfilment of that demand in his own strength is required. Repentance, however urgently it may be required, is not merely a command but a promise, which may be renounced.[29] Where the sinner is renewed as a firstfruits of God's creatures,[30] there at the same time is seen a fulfilment of a holy and gracious good-pleasure,[31] by which not only the willing, but also the doing, is effected in the man who in himself is powerless. Here, too, Christian experience is in most perfect harmony with the utterances of Holy Scripture, which everywhere testifies that it is God by whose grace the work of this sanctification is effected.[32] Living in communion with the dead and risen Christ, the Christian receives in a constantly increasing degree the gifts of grace (χαρίσματα), which though marked by great diversity, yet always have the same aim, viz., to make him more and more a partaker of the Divine nature.[33] Without doubt true Christian life from time to time increases in elasticity and independence; but there is not a single step in its development in which we can do without the sanctifying power of grace. On the contrary, by this alone is every movement in advance secured: the Spirit, which was the first principle of life, becomes ever more the indwelling power of life, and all the Christian virtues, by which faith is revealed, are collectively called, as distinguished from the many works of the flesh, the fruit of the Spirit,[34] because they display the inner unity of a life developed from a higher than a merely natural root.

7. Thus Christian life draws ever more towards its desired completion, in connection with which Preparing and Redeeming grace exhibits also its character as Preserving and All-conquering. By its power the Christian is ever more established in his communion with Christ. It is unnecessary to repeat everything which has already in § cxxi. been adduced as to the perseverance of the saints; but it is not superfluous to remark that the care of God, by which this preservation is assured, may at the same time be called a revelation and final triumph of the highest grace. It is this grace, indeed, which continually preserves the true believer at least from such a falling away, that by it his personal communion with Christ should be entirely destroyed. We do not mean that the Christian sees himself compelled, as it were, with irresistible force, to the accomplishing of his sanctification. On the contrary, it still remains true, "that the Holy Ghost as a Personality can never offer the slightest violence to the Personality of

[29] Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27; Lam. v. 21; Acts xi. 18.
[30] James i. 18.
[31] Phil. ii. 13.
[32] 1 Thess. v. 23; 2 Thess. i. 3.
[33] 2 Pet. i. 4.
[34] Gal. v. 22.

man, *but also* that He is infinitely superior to it, but only in His own sphere, in the domain of Love, of freedom, where His irresistibility proves itself equally as His absolutely delivering power" (Lange). It is this moral superiority of grace, and not the goodness of its own nature, which faith must thank for preventing it, even in severe conflict, from being driven from its firm position.[35] While there is so much which in its turn so presses and harasses heart and spirit, a preservation so careful, steadfast, and blessed, deserves, in a certain sense at least, to be called nothing less than a moral miracle.

8. At the same time the Christian by this grace of God is ever more *assured* of his state of salvation. To it indeed he is indebted for the joyful certainty of his childlike relation to God, and the love of God which is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost.[36] The Apostle expresses the same thought in a different form, when he speaks of the sealing of the faithful by that Spirit unto the day of redemption.[37] As the seal of the writer is a token of the genuineness of a letter, and this, too, of the trustworthiness of the promise made in it, so is the Spirit of Life in us the evidence of faith, but also the security for its speedy reward. To the question whether the Christian is already assured here of future salvation, the Romish Church from its standpoint must inevitably give a negative reply. Where man will be justified by works, he will never be at peace; for the natural fear or dread of an absolute falling short can never be completely banished. He, however, who "hopes to the end for grace,"[38] and builds upon it alone, may at the same time regard himself, as not only quickened together with Christ, but also as already set in heaven.[39] No wonder that the Apostolic writers not merely expressly declare this full assurance of faith, but also exhort the Church continually to strive after it.[40] Where it is founded on the only firm ground, it deserves as little the reproach of vain pride, as that of a thoughtless fanaticism, which it has not seldom evoked. Indeed, this assurance of hope is not grounded upon any pretended special revelation, but simply follows from the belief in God's eternal faithfulness, and finds its firm foundation in the testimony of the Holy Ghost within, whilst the fruits of the Spirit prove that here there is something more than the utterance of a lamentable self-deceit (Cf. *Can. Dord.*, v.). This assurance, though now and then clouded, and not seldom for a time suppressed by one's own fault, specially raises itself in times of strife and temptation in individual cases, to a glorious height; and where in others it is entirely or in great part wanting, this is only the fruit of their unbelief, which prevents them from abounding in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.[41]

9. That hope maketh not ashamed, because it has the word of God for its foundation, and His Spirit as its inner security. "Whom He has justified, those has He (here already in principle) *glorified*." These grand words[42] already lead us beyond the boundaries of this world; yet we do not here refrain from using them, because they express not merely what the Christian

[35] 2 Pet. iii. 17.
[36] Rom. v. 5; viii. 16.
[37] Ephes. iv. 30; 2 Cor. i. 22; v. 5.
[38] 1 Pet. i. 13.
[39] Ephes. ii. 5, 6; comp. *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 58.
[40] Rom. viii. 38, 39; Heb. vi. 11.
[41] Rom. xv. 13.
[42] Rom. viii. 30.

shall one day be, but what in principle he is already here. "In an individual human life, which really belongs to God, *all* discordances must in the end vanish" (Rothe). By this we do not mean that there will be no temporary disturbances and fallings away, which may delay—perceptibly delay—the full triumph of grace in the heart. But still, as the profound consciousness of the Christian already declares, that it would be absolutely impossible for him to set himself entirely free from his inner relation to Christ, so is it still more certainly assured to him by the promise of the grace of God, written as it were by the finger of the Holy Ghost upon the tables of his heart. It is true, this glorying in the faith may give offence, "Sed si de veritate scandalum sumitur, utilius permittitur nasci scandalum, quam veritas relinquatur" (Gregory the Great). The well-grounded consciousness that the grace of God continues to the last the pulse of every spiritual life, and that it will not fail in the end to perfect its own work, is an inexhaustible source both of consolation and sanctification, and calls forth an Amen to the words of the Apostle, "Where is boasting, then? It is excluded."[43]

Compare R. ENGELS, *Geloofsroem* (1835); W. MUURLING, *Kan de Christen van zijn' toekomst. Gelukstaat reeds hier verzekerd zijn, etc.*, in *Waarheid in Liefde* (1842), iv.; C. BRAUNE, *De Sünde der Wiedergebornen, Theol. Stud. und Krit.* (1847), ii.; D. CH. DE LA SAUSSAYE, *Rechtvaardiging door welk geloof?* in the magazine *Ernst en Vrede*, ii. (1854), p. 117, *sqq.*, as well as the writers quoted in §§ cxix. and cxxii., to which may be added the Essay of LANGE, *De Electione, quomodo accuratius sit definiendum* (1854).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

The *catena salutis* (Rom. viii. 30).—Meaning and truth of the words of the Lord (John vi. 44, 45).—The import of Matt. xxii. 14.—Does the doctrine of the grace of God occupy the same place in the teaching of all the writers of the New Testament?—What is the end which the Divine Grace proposes for all its labours? and why does it gain that end by such diverse ways?—The deep import of the doctrine of *gratia præveniens*.—The varying use of the word κλῆσις in the writings of the New Testament.—The difference between the Romish, Protestant, and Crypto-Catholic presentation of the justification of the sinner before God.—Is Christ *for* us, or Christ *in* us, the ultimate ground of our hope? —The *lis terministica* of the 17th and 18th centuries.—The meaning of John i. 16; compare the περισσεία τῆς χάριτος (Rom. v. 17).—Is it also possible to receive the grace of God in vain? (2 Cor. vi. 1).

SECTION CXXIV.—ITS CHARACTER.

The mode in which the grace of God brings about and strengthens all spiritual good in us, has from the nature of the case many very mysterious aspects. Yet it is ever again evident that this mode is entirely in accordance, on one hand, with the high majesty of God,

[43] Rom. iii. 27

on the other, with the disposition, needs, and destiny of man, and consequently exhibits a character entirely worthy of God.

1. After all that has been said, it cannot possibly be denied, that the grace of God really occupies an all-important place in the entire history of the development of the spiritual life. The less may the question be eliminated as to the mode in which this grace works, and the laws which it follows in its gifts and manifestations; a question, in itself admissible, and of undeniable importance for the thoughtful believer, but at the same time in itself so little capable of entire solution, that he who offered to solve it completely would at once awaken distrust. Yet we may not refrain from a prudent research, thankfully using the light kindled by the Gospel and experience, at the same time being on our guard against an arid dogmatism which might give us stones for bread. Even though this discussion does not lead to a conclusion in every respect satisfactory, it need not on that account be therefore unfruitful or unimportant. "When science has reached the extent of rendering our darkness visible, it has on certain subjects done the greatest service we could expect of it" (Vinet).

2. And then it is at once evident that the operation of grace, which we are discussing here, may be called in the most proper sense *supranatural in origin;* in other words, that the drawing to, and the sanctification of, the sinner is not the fruit of the means of grace in himself, however good and excellent they may be, but only of the grace of God, which itself works constantly and directly by the means ordained by Him. Here, too, we use the word Supranatural, in the sense not merely of supra-sensuous, but of supra-creatural, to denote an operation, which takes place *on* man, but which cannot be entirely explained by man, or by any merely finite thing. We have already paused to consider the objection that such a supranatural operation would be either impossible, or in any case not be perceptible as such (§ cxxii.). That statement, however, though apparently philosophical, is as degrading to God as to man, who is allied to his Maker; and in opposition to it we might boldly postulate another,—it would be unnatural, in the higher sense of the word, not to recognise in this domain the Supranatural. Only let care be taken that the word Supranatural be not conceived in the sense of absolutely immediate; God is and continues the sole fountain of all good, yet that good flows to us through countless channels prepared by Him, which, however, are in no case independent streams. It is not Lydia herself, nor Paul, but the Lord, who opens the heart of Lydia, by and through the preaching of Paul. Such an operation of grace must indeed exhibit a mysterious character, and makes us think of the question put by Zophar in Job xi. 7—9. Yet even there the rule is applicable; the indistinctness of the *manner* does not do away with the certainty of the *fact*, when sufficient proofs of this last are to be found in Scripture and Experience. This is now the case here; it is specially a Supranatural, in the literal sense of the word Divine, grace, raised above all finite power, which is here promised and sought for, granted and thankfully recognised; and every sinner, who is truly converted, knows best that ultimately he has to thank himself as little as any other creature for his conversion.

Certainly, to conclude, as to the good which is wrought in us, "not of ourselves, but of God," we must already occupy the standpoint of faith in a personal living God. But this standpoint is not indeed in any respect unreasonable; and the proposition, that where spiritual death is transformed into spiritual life, a higher Power has been at work, can be sufficiently justified. Even experience teaches that in a purely natural way development and progress along the same line are obtained, but not a true new beginning of life. Thus Naturalism denies even in principle the possibility of a true regeneration, and so closes the way to the Kingdom of God. If Strauss somewhere calls it "theoretically a kind of delusion, to desire to perceive heavenly influences, and to feel that they are operations of Grace, and not of Nature," we cannot more nobly avenge ourselves than by wishing for him and his followers an attack of that "mania" for which the Kingdom of God is obliged to His Apostles and Prophets.

3. Indeed, what lies originally without man, is by no means also intended to advance and to be completed without man. *Reasonable in its nature* is the operation of grace, which we contemplate with due reverence. It is so for the very reason that it generally works only *mediately*. What the means are, which the grace of God employs in the conversion and sanctification of the sinner, will be treated of hereafter; here we have only to do with the principle itself, and thus every magical or mechanical presentation is at once and emphatically rejected. The same Apostle, who points to God as giving the increase, declares at the same time that planting and watering are indispensable conditions, from which that increase is to be expected.[1] The Reformers, too, have on different occasions pronounced as strongly as possible against the doctrine of the so-called Enthusiasts, who appealed to the utterances of the Spirit beyond the written word of God. Nor does a different note meet us in the Confessions of the Netherlands Reformed Church (*H. C.*, Ans. 65; *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxiv.). Even in those rare cases where we cannot demonstrate any means, we have no right to speak of immediate operations in the objective and absolute meaning of the word. Indeed, the operation of the grace of God is brought about *entirely in accordance with the rational and moral nature of man.* In no single point is it fatalistic; it pursues everywhere the psychological path. Scripture teaches us,[2] that God guides the king's heart as the rivers of water; the difference between the stream of water which is borne on by the storm as a blind force, and man, who is led on as a rational and moral being, without his original nature being weakened, must not be overlooked or under-valued. This is evident, *inter alia*, even in this, that God guides the sinner only gradually from light to light, from glory to glory.[3] Here the kingdom of grace is entirely in harmony with the kingdom of nature;[4] as the work of creation, so also is that of the re-creation of man and of mankind completed in different periods. On this point the orthodox Reformed exhibits a special excellence above the Lutheran, when the first, as distinguished from the last, lays such great stress upon the fact that God does not treat men as "stocks and stones" (sicuti lapides et trunci). "As

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7.
[2] Prov. xxi. 1.
[3] 2 Cor. iii. 18; 2 Pet. iii. 18.
[4] Mark iv. 26—29.

man by the fall has not ceased to be man—so also this Divine grace of regeneration acts not on man as on stocks and stones, nor takes away his will and properties, but makes him spiritually alive, heals, amends, and bends him in a way which is alike gracious and potent; so that, where previously the violence and resistance of the flesh exercised an absolute sway, now a voluntary and sincere obedience of the spirit begins to rule" (*Can. Dord.*, Art. iii. iv., §16). God does not compel man by a mechanical force, but draws him on and moves him by the moral power of His love. Nowhere does either Scripture or Church teach that the sinner is entirely passive at the commencement of his repentance. The voice, which cries awake! comes not to corpses, but to the spiritually dead, in whom a capacity for life still remained,[5] a receptivity, even where we cannot think of any spontaneity without the influence of the preparing grace of God. The grace of God leads the sinner to faith, but always in such wise, that the latter's believing surrender to Christ is his own personal act. "Never does man appear to be more powerfully determined by God, than in the summons to grace, and yet it is that very summons which calls his freedom from its latent form into actual existence" (Lange).—And, finally, as to the sanctification of the Christian, here both Scripture and experience give us the right to speak not only of an operating (*gratia operans*), but of a co-operating grace of God (*gratia co-operans*), in this sense, that it is really our own effort which is called forth and rewarded by God, so that the Christian may with full justice be called a fellow-worker with God in the salvation of himself and others.[6] Far from personal activity being here excluded, it is rather presupposed and required. Grace does no violence to original (formal) freedom; this, too, is a gift of God, and God respects His own work in mankind. The operation of grace is essentially a supranatural act, but an act accomplished in the form of a psychological process of life. God seeks in man for the hidden point of union, and treats him, seldom according to his wish, but the more certainly according to his individual needs. Grace sanctifies the centre of the personality, and hence causes the new life to flow gradually to every part of the circumference.

4. So already the operation of the grace of God begins to reveal itself to our eyes as most *sublime in its way of working*, and we involuntarily call to mind the figure of the wind used in John iii. 8, by Jesus Himself. It shows to us not merely one, but three points of coincidence, which from time to time strike us in the work of renewal.—Like the action of the wind, so is that of the Holy Ghost *unlimited* in its working in regard to all human power. The wind and the Spirit, it blows "where it listeth." Certainly we must, where we speak of the sovereignty of God, reject every idea of unjust arbitrariness. But yet, as the wind blows now from this quarter, and then from that, without the power of man being able to confine it or shut it out, so the Spirit of renewal works with a freedom which cannot in any degree be disputed. Why is this sinner led to the light of truth just at this particular time, and that one at a much later period, or never at any time? Why does the calling into the Kingdom of God come to one nation in this century, to another for the first time in a

[5] John v. 25; Luke xv. 24.

[6] 1 Cor. iii. 9; Phil. ii. 12, 13.

succeeding one? Though we are able in a certain degree to give a reply, yet the final, and in many cases the only reply must again and again be, "Thus it pleased God." Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή.—For *inexplicable* ever remains the working both of wind and Spirit, "ye know not whence it cometh or whither it goeth." No progress in science has as yet contradicted these words of the Lord; it knows to a certain degree the laws, but seeks in vain for the cradle, of the storm. On the other hand, too, in the spiritual domain of life, "non vult vagabundis speculationibus quæri Deus" (Melancthon). Every spiritual life is, like the natural life in its deepest course, a mystery; impenetrable, yet not irrational, because God knows the entrances to every heart, whilst moreover the Spirit of God and man are akin to one another, just as the wind is not of a different nature to the atmosphere, which is set in motion by it.—Enough, that the operation of Spirit and of wind is *recognisable* in the effect of both; "Ye hear its sound," says the Lord. The personality remains (§ cxxii. 3), but the whole direction of life is changed; the new man is like the planet which is transferred into an entirely different solar system. Certainly, it is in itself very possible that a fanatic may without reason fancy he has experienced a higher influence. But still, where a renewal is effected, such as Scripture and experience testify of with regard to every redeemed sinner,[7] there already the principle of sufficient cause forces us either to give up all attempt at explanation, or to recognise here the reality of the operation of the grace of God. An infinite wealth of the gifts of grace (*charismata*), is called into existence through its influence, by which the original capacity of our nature, no longer under the dominion of sin, is most beautifully realised. And if now, in conclusion, we consider of what great value each of these countless charismata may be, and really becomes for the possessor himself, for the Kingdom of God, and the whole world, we shall not soon grow weary of repeating with a softened heart the glorious language of the Apostle in Eph. i. 3, *sqq.*

5. It was presupposed in what has been said, that the grace of God, bestowed on the sinner, was not given in vain, and that the received gift was faithfully employed, because only to him that hath shall be given.[8] "Works are the food of Faith, their diligent and faithful use the oil for the burning lamp: to produce nothing by the power of grace, and not to bring forth fruit from its seed, is sufficient for the justice which retakes that which the man seemed to have, but which was no longer his in the true sense" (R. Stier). Where, however, this law is obeyed, there in the end the grace of God is manifest as *victorious in its power*. We come back here to the great dispute in the domain of the theology of the Reformation between the Lutherans and the Calvinists. While the Lutheran creeds asserted, that even the justified could still commit deadly sins, and consequently forfeit entirely the grace they had received, and hence resisted the Anabaptist proposition, that the Holy Ghost could never depart entirely from believers; those who had followed in the steps of Calvin ranged themselves on the exactly opposite side. Against the Remonstrants, who maintained that the mode of the operation of the grace of God was

[7] 2 Cor. v. 17.

[8] Matt. xiii. 12.

not irresistible, and in proof of this view appealed to Acts vii. 51, and many other passages, the Synod of Dordt maintained (*Can. Dord.*, iii., iv., Art. 8), that this "is nothing less than to take away all the efficacy of the grace of God in our conversion, and to subject to the will of man the operations of Almighty God." Indeed, though often misinterpreted and misused, we cannot fail to recognise in this proposition, as in that of the perseverance of the saints, the expression of a truth, equally certain and consoling. The operation, however, of the Holy Ghost is by no means solely an "external, moral persuading," to which man at every moment during his life may offer opposition, but a truly Divine power, which is absolutely in a condition, and therefore intended, to overcome all opposition; not merely an external influence *upon*, but an internal one *in* man, which also gradually entirely subdues the little world, through which it penetrates. That the Holy Ghost may be long resisted, and is actually resisted, is evident as well from experience, as from such passages of Scripture as Acts vii. 51, Matt. xxiii. 37, etc., which must not be defrauded of their force. The possibility, too, of a continued resistance follows from the idea of an eternal, and thus also unpardonable sin.[9] But this exception confirms, rather than annuls, the opposite rule. We must, however, carefully distinguish here between a malevolent and a merely natural resistance to the operation of the Holy Ghost (*resistentia malitiosa, et naturalis*). We have already seen the terrible possibility of the first; but with regard to the last, it may be expected that the same sun, which hardens the soil and vainly shines upon the stones, will also melt the dam of ice. "The truest love will prevail; men *feel* it at last, and weeping bitterly cling to it as children to the mother's knee" (Novalis). Thus is it, when a man has not ceased to be a man, and has not unceasingly laid waste and uprooted what the grace of God had established and planted within his heart. The expression "irresistible grace" (gratia *irresistibilis*) may perhaps be not very happily chosen, and has readily given occasion to think of a mechanical compulsion. The morally victorious power of the truth and grace of God upon every heart willing to receive it, is most certainly established by Scripture and experience.[10] The grace of God is only irresistible in the sense in which the love, to which a man voluntarily surrenders himself, is irresistible. Yet in that sense it is continually manifested in those to whom it makes a moral impossibility to "kick any longer against the pricks," and it triumphs in and over every sinner, whom it, we might sometimes almost say, in spite of himself, preserves.

6. However incomplete and imperfect, still what we have said proves sufficiently that the mode, in which God's grace works on the sinner, may be called thoroughly *worthy of God*. Many questions certainly still remain, but, properly considered, they are not different from those which occur even in regard to the very different dispensation of temporal gifts and intellectual powers, and which again and again convince us afresh that the justice, wisdom, and love of God must not be estimated by a purely human rule. Least of all may we forget that God is not in any degree indebted to any

[9] Mark iii. 29; Heb. vi. 4—6.
[10] Compare Jer. xxiii. 29; Matt. xiii. 33; Phil. i. 6; 2 John 2.

man; that He looks both to time and to eternity for His justification, and that in some case the answer of the Apostle, Rom. ix. 20, must remain the last and best reply. It is a great consolation that the limits of our thoughts and ways are not yet the limits of the thoughts and ways of God. Still the desire for "more light," Goethe's last words on his death-bed, is not unnatural; and therefore, in the last question, as to the relation between the operation of the grace of God and the moral freedom of man, the investigation of the different ways in which this connection has been presented in earlier and later ages, is appropriate. Hereafter it will be necessary and possible to treat, by the light of Scripture and experience, of a final judgment.

Compare SCHOLTEN, *l. c.*, ii., pp. 496—501, 581—584; MARTENSEN, *Christian Dogmatics* (Eng. trans.), p. 353, *sqq.*; LANGE, *l. c.*, ii., p. 1078; and BOEHMER'S article *Geistesgaben*, in Herzog, *R. E.*, iv., p. 735, *sqq.*, with the literature quoted there.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Distinction and connection of the natural and the supranatural domain.—To what extent may we admit, and to what extent reject, the expression *free grace?*—The import of Acts xxvi. 14, compare Gal. iii. 4.—What connection is there between the Romish, Lutheran, and Remonstrant presentation of the power of grace?—May Ans. 60 of the Heidelberg Catechism be misused, and how can this misuse be best resisted?—May the grace of God be said to prevail at *any* cost over internal opposition?

SECTION CXXV.—ITS VARYING CONCEPTION.

Throughout all ages of Christianity the thoughtful mind has in a greater or less degree pondered the problem of the connection of this Divine operation of grace with human freedom; but in doing this, at one time too much importance has been attached to the Divine, to the loss of the human factor, or to the human, at the expense of the Divine; a phenomenon, which may with reason be deplored, but at the same time can be sufficiently explained. Even after able and praiseworthy efforts to combine the two members of the great antithesis in a higher unity, up to the present time the question has not found a solution, in every respect satisfactory.

1. When we take a general survey of the conflict in the Christian Church concerning freedom and grace, it is then impossible to speak of clearly defined periods; but we see indeed different tendencies partly succeed one another, partly also run on side by side as parallel lines of greater or less length, which are well worthy of our observation. Under one of these

opposite tendencies all combatants may be ranged, while it is again self-evident that it is not possible to draw up a complete account, but only to point out the principal phenomena.

2. In the ancient Church, Eastern as well as Western, we see freedom and grace placed side by side in a still undefined order. If the human will alone is called insufficient, the Divine operation still takes effect without any compulsion; whatever good is effected in and by us, is the result of the co-operation of the two factors, whose reality is recognised, even though we do not yet make their possibility a subject of express Christian thought. "A nobis initium est, ut Ille perficiat, meritum adipiscendæ consummationis est ex initio voluntatis" (Hilary). Everywhere there prevails the school of thought, which is afterwards more clearly defined as semi-Pelagian; and though the grace of God is recognised in general, it is still brought more into connection with the knowledge, than with the will of man. Involuntarily we sometimes think of the words of Pascal, "There are Fathers of the Church whom we ought rather to call babes." Nothing is yet formulated; everything is spoken of indiscriminately; and the question as to a higher unity never presses with urgent force. The leaders of this epoch are the forerunners of many in later days, who assume the standpoint of a vague uncertainty, either because they think no higher one attainable, or because they feel no imperative need of this higher aim.

3. Soon, however, do we see *freedom maintained with partiality, even to the disavowal of grace.* Pelagius recognises a freedom of the will, proper to heathen, Jews, and Christians naturally; like everything, derived from God, but yet of such a nature that man of his own strength can will that which is good. To grace he ascribes in a wide sense the entire Divine revelation, inclusive of the law, and the example of the Saviour. Thus grace teaches what we have to do, and can do, yet the accomplishment is not of it, but of ourselves, though even then not entirely without its beneficent help, which may be earned by the well-intentioned man. Sin, in his estimation less a principle than an act, need not on that account be committed; if man must really, according to the moral law, be unsullied, he can be so. "Ego dico, posse hominem Christianum sine peccato esse, et mandata Dei posse custodire." Though condemned by the Council of Ephesus (431), this school lived on even into later ages, and revealed itself again, specially in the latest and least worthy representatives of the Scholasticism of the Middle Ages, whose theoretical semi-Pelagianism developed into practical Pelagianism, and as such was vehemently rebuked by Luther. "Absurdissima est consequentia, homo errans potest diligere creaturam super omnia, ergo et Deum" (Thes. pro Bibl. 1517). Among the Socinians, on the other hand, the principal Deists, and the older Naturalists, we see the Pelagian leaven working in different forms, until the doctrine of special operations of grace is by Rationalism entirely resolved into that of Providence (Wegscheider). Bengel complains already against the Pelagianism of his days, which, in addition to other ways, was seen in this, that the operations of grace became more and more strange, and objects of suspicion to man, "so that, if Pelagius were now to appear, he would without doubt bewail the Pelagianism of this age." In consequence of the close relationship of

the "righteousness by works" among Romanists and Rationalists, there has not been any improvement in their views in modern times.

4. In contrast with this onesidedness, however, we see on the other hand, throughout every age, *grace, not unfrequently glorified at the expense of human freedom.* Induced by his conflict with Pelagius to change his former standpoint, we hear Augustine entirely deny all freedom to man, except the freedom to do ill, and speak of a "dira necessitas peccandi." This is first overcome by special grace; the "gratia gratis data," which works "indeclinabiliter et insuperabiliter," and effects true, moral freedom;[1] though he readily allows that this does not act "sicut in lapidibus insensatis." So strongly does he express himself, that he was repeatedly reproached by the opposite party with partiality and fatalism. Prosper Aquitanus († 455) and Fulgentius of Ruspe († 533), defended his position, though not without some change; and Gregory the Great, in particular, handed it down in a milder form to a later generation. How little the Romish Church, with all her reverence for the renowned Father, clung to his doctrine of grace is universally known. Even among those Scholastics who attached themselves principally to his school, Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, and some others, this was not done without actual reserve. The Reformers of the sixteenth century were the first to return to the theoretically and practically deserted standpoint of Augustine, in their treatment of the doctrine of grace. In opposition to Erasmus, who continued to ascribe to the natural man a "facultas se ad gratiam applicandi et se avertendi ab illâ," Luther came forth as a consistent opponent of all freedom of will. He compared man to a saw, which remains powerless in the hand of the workman; or to a horse, which, whether it be ridden by God or Satan, passively fulfils the will of its rider. If he did not indeed deny entirely the possibility of civil or social virtue, the more strongly did he deny this with regard to all spiritual good, while he considered the first as the work of a slave rather than as that of a child of God. Nor does the first edition of the *Loci* of Melancthon breathe a different spirit; it declares in plain words, "Nulla est voluntatis nostræ libertas." Specially did Zwingle, and along with him Calvin, see himself forced by the consistency of his conception of Predestination, to an absolute denial of all human freedom (see, *e.g.*, *Inst.* ii. 2), though the first did not refrain from the prudent advice, "Heus tu, caute, ista ad populum, et rarius etiam." Their dogmatic system, confirmed in its sublapsariam form at Dordt, in 1618, was carefully developed by the orthodox Reformed Theologians of the seventeenth century; while in the Romish Church the doctrine of grace, taught by Augustine, was emphatically maintained by the Jansenists and Port Royalists, the Protestants of their century, in the bosom of the mother-Church. Upon the side of philosophy this tendency found allies in men who started from entirely different principles, Bayle, Leibnitz, Spinoza, and others, who declared themselves supporters of Determinism. As a logically necessary development of the central dogma of the Reformed Church, this last was defended, from a theological standpoint, by Schleiermacher, Scholten, and Schweitzer; from that of Philosophy, by Romang, Siegwart, and others. That the modern Naturalism and Materialism, if it will at least be consistent,

[1] John viii. 36.

must fall back upon the theory of De la Mettrie, "man is a machine," and to the confession of Voltaire, "we are the puppets of Providence," is also evident.

5. Between these parties of the extreme Left and Right, we see a third party, the *Synergistic*,[2] which seeks the safe via media. If man, according to Pelagius, is passably healthy, and, according to Augustine, totally dead spiritually, according to the semi-Pelagian view he is seriously, though not hopelessly, ill. This view, maintained by John Cassianus and Faustus of Reggio at the beginning of the fifth century, sought to remove the objection which the strict doctrine of predestination, held by Augustine, had excited in many minds. It recognised indeed the propagation and power of moral evil by sin, yet with this limitation, that man had preserved both the *scientia*, and the *possibilitas boni*, though even then he was not in a condition in his own strength believingly to accept the Gospel. Here, too, freedom takes the initiative in the work of conversion, yet in such wise, that grace comes at least half-way to meet it. Chiefly in the Romish Church of the Middle Ages do we see this theory developed in its full consequences. Even Bernard of Clairvaux declares, "Manet etiam post peccatum liberum arbitrium, etsi miserum, tamen integrum." Along with grace in the proper sense of the word (gratia gratis data) is recognised a grace, which makes man so acceptable to God (gratia gratum faciens), that he by his own merit can gain God's favour for himself and others. "Bona voluntas comitatur gratiam, non gratia voluntatem" (P. Lombard). According to Thomas Aquinas, grace and freedom so co-operate in the conversion of the sinner, that the latter may either accept or reject the first-named—a dogmatic definition, which was soon assumed by the Council of Trent as its own. "Si quis dixerit, liberum arbitrium, a Deo motum et excitatum, nihil co-operari assentiendo Deo excitanti atque vocanti, quo ad obtinendam justificationis gratiam se disponet ac præparet, neque posse dissentire, si velit . . . . anathema sit" (*Sess.* 6, *Can.* 4). In its conflict with Luther also, it started from the same proposition, *inter alios*, by the mouth of Eck, who in the famed discussion laid down the maxim, "Est voluntas in animâ, sicut rex in regno;" to which Luther replied with a different comparison, "Sicut lena in prostibulo." Yet we see afterwards in the Lutheran Church the Synergistic theory supported by Melancthon and his allies. In the later edition of his *Loci*, the Præceptor Germaniæ now declares, "Concurrunt in conversione tres causæ, Verbum Dei, Spiritus Sanctus, et *humana voluntas*, assentiens, non reluctans Verbo Dei." This Synergism, supported by J. Pfeffinger (1555) in his treatise, *De servo arbitrio*, and soon after by Vict. Strigel (1560), was condemned by Amsdorff, but was rather objected to than overcome in the later determining of Lutheran orthodoxy. The *Formula Concordiæ* (1580) looks for a mean between the Synergism of Melancthon and the absolute decree of Calvin, but finds it—only at the loss of rigid consistency. Just as by these, so is the doctrine of *gratia resistibilis* confessed also by the Remonstrants, who considered a continual co-operation of the free human will with the grace of God an absolutely necessary condition of all conversion. But even in the Reformed Church a more Synergistic presen-

[2] 1 Cor. iii. 9a.

ation gradually penetrated, instead of the earlier strictly Deterministic one. In general the Supranaturalism of the last century may be said to occupy this standpoint of accommodation, which was first strongly repelled by the revival of orthodox views in the first half of the present. Among the most celebrated German theologians of our day, C. I. Nitzsch and J. Müller must specially be named as the supporters of an elevated Synergism; in Holland the Groningen School, at its most flourishing period, started chiefly from the same principles, though these were less systematically developed. The doctrine of Determinism was emphatically contested, among others, by Ritter (*System der Logik und Metaph.* ii., § 239, *sq.*), and in Holland by Professors N. C. Kist (1859), and S. Hoekstra (1858). If the conflict is for the moment at rest, it is by no means because it is finally decided, but because the attention of the wearied disputants is for a time directed to questions entirely different. Now, as ever, the world of thought sees itself, in respect to this problem, divided into two distinct camps; while it is not an unheard-of thing for some to pass from one camp to the other, in consequence of a change in their views of the world and life, or of their accepting a mode of thought which can with difficulty be combined with their theological standpoint. Thus was the standard of Indeterminism raised in German Switzerland by the talented representative of Modernism, H. Lang (1859); while, on the other hand, Professor Opzoomer (1865), who first declared himself in favour of freedom of the will, afterwards, though not without much difficulty and conflict, became a supporter of its absolutely consistent denial. Strange indeed, and yet not entirely inexplicable! "Quæstio est ita difficilis, ut quando defenditur liberum arbitrium, negari Dei gratia videatur, quando autem asseritur Dei gratia, liberum arbitrium putatur auferri" (Augustine). Generally we may say, that though in our day there are not wanting men of mark who support the freedom of the will, as, *e.g.*, Ch. Sécretan in his *Philosophie de la liberté*, yet under various influences the balance appears for the time to incline more to the opposite side. It is, however, a different question, whether human thought, and specially the human conscience, will be able to find rest for a continuance in Ethical Determinism; of the physical we do not even speak.

Compare the literature mentioned in § lxii., to which must be added D. LANDERER, *Verhältniss von Gnade und Freiheit*, in the *Jahrb. für deutsche Theol.* (1857), iii.; C. E. LUTHARDT, *Die Lehre vom freien Willen und seinem Verhältniss zur Gnade* (1863); H. MARTENSEN, *Ethik* (1871), pp. 153—183. Upon the controversy between Luther and Erasmus, W. FRANCKEN, *Jaarbb. van Wetensch. Theol.*, v., p. 203.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Cause of the absence of dogmatic development on this point in the first centuries.—The conflict between Augustine and Pelagius, in connection with their different individualities.—The doctrine of *Merit* in connection with the system of the Romish Church.—What judgment should be formed on the dispute between Erasmus and Luther concerning free or servile will?—How to explain the change in Melancthon's views.—History and import of the Synergistic dispute in the Lutheran Church.—The third and fourth articles of the doctrine in dispute between Remonstrants and Contra-Remonstrants.—The Synergism of the Groningen School.—The conception of free-will under the influence of later speculation, and of the Empirical School.

SECTION CXXVI.—RESULT.

The conflict between grace and freedom, which still remains an unresolved problem in the domain of Christian philosophic thought, finds to a certain extent a solution in the sphere of spiritual experience, which incessantly shows us, that the two are continually meeting, without ever destroying one another. Though often misapprehended and misused, the doctrine of grace, not less than that of personal responsibility, stands for this reason immovably firm, and is, when presented in its due connection, of preponderating influence, both on our whole theological system, and on our entire Christian life.

1. After our historical survey of this discussion, it is not unnatural to ask, which side do we intend to take? This much is at once evident, that serious difficulties exist against each of the two cardinal views. Lowest of all undoubtedly stands the Pelagian. Its conception of free-will is as faulty as its presentation of grace is inaccurate, and, properly regarded, unnecessary. A freedom, in which the human will is like the tongue of a balance, with an equal weight in both scales, conflicts irreconcilably with experience, as well as with the laws of a more profound psychology. The will is here entirely separated from the other capacities and powers of the soul; man is no longer regarded as an organic whole, and the abnormal condition of his nature, in consequence of the dominion of sin, is entirely overlooked. It is unnecessary to enumerate here all the passages of Scripture, in which letter and spirit lead to diametrically opposite positions, or to observe what scant justice is from this standpoint done to the constant relation between God and man, which the whole Gospel, in unison with a sound philosophy, so evidently declares. Enough, that an over-rating of freedom, such as is here observed, proceeds from an untenable Deistic conception of God, and may in its consequences lead to Atheism.

2. From the opposite standpoint these difficulties are certainly avoided, but it does not by any means hence follow, that the theory of Augustine can be unreservedly accepted. Undoubtedly it exhibits a deeply religious character, which is sought in vain on the other side, and also a ground in the Father's own experience, which must not be lightly estimated. His Theology, as well as his Hamartology, stands far above those of his Rationalistic opponent, and many passages in the Epistles of Paul give special and unmistakable testimony in favour of his doctrine of grace and free-will. On the other hand, however, there are not wanting passages which can hardly be reconciled with a consistent Augustinianism.[1] If redemption in the

[1] See, *e.g.*, Matt. xxiii. 37; John v. 40; Rom. ii. 4.

proper sense of the word is unnecessary from the standpoint of Pelagius, from that of Augustine it may be called only metaphysically, but not psychologically, possible. As his doctrine of grace depends upon a conception of the fall and its consequences, which, by the light of Holy Scripture, we cannot unconditionally accept (comp. § lxxv. ii. 3), so the proposition which he upholds, of a more or less magical operation of grace, leads almost inevitably to a sluggish passivity. It is at least not manifest how from this standpoint we can maintain the conceptions of guilt and imputation, which he (rightly) will not surrender. How far the sharp distinction between freedom in a natural sense, and want of freedom in a moral, which on this side is generally maintained, can in the end be preserved, is a question which possibly may here be better left at rest. But this much is certain, that at the end of this line the precipice of Pantheism, with its inexorable consequences, threatens us, and that the danger of forgetting the lesson of Phil. ii. 12, is here as little a pure matter of imagination, as on the Pelagian side is the chance of partially or entirely overlooking the truth announced in verse 13.

3. Though there seems thus to be nothing left between a consistent Determinism or Indeterminism, it cannot be at all surprising, that men in all ages have displayed the courage of a "sacred inconsistency," and in its name have sought refuge in semi-Pelagianism. But there is a refuge which may be bought too dearly, and the charge of indefiniteness and indecision, so often repeated against this solution of the great question, is more than a vain complaint. The presentation of such an external help to good, as is here accepted, sacrifices the recognition of the Divine immanence to that of His transcendency, and can thus be sustained only upon a Deistic, not upon a Theistic, basis. Where man works here, God does not properly work; where God, on the other hand, begins, human self-activity as such ceases, and full justice is nowhere done to the exact connection between the two. For the semi-Pelagian the relation between God and man is similar to that which one finite creature bears to another. He entirely overlooks the fact that if man really wills and aims at some good thing, this is in no way brought about without God, but just from the force of his personal communion with Him. The distinction by which the honour of the willing is ascribed to us, and that of fulfilling the will to God, is in the highest degree unpsychological; rather would a distinction in the opposite sense (though groundless, too) be here conceivable. But what Christian can ever in his spiritual life indicate even a *minimum*, of which the honour must not belong to Him who works all things after the counsel of His will? As little as experience does Scripture favour this "division of operation," and we are not surprised to hear the attempt at accommodation in this manner haughtily rejected by Strauss as "aimless and purposeless vacillation." If Pelagianism places a preponderating value on the moral, and Augustinianism on the religious, side of the question, semi-Pelagianism does proper justice to neither of the sides.

4. This being so, it is not perhaps too hazardous to declare that a solution of the problem, in which both terms will have their full rights, has thus far not been found. Certainly "in the religious life all is free-will, all

grace, and free-will itself is the highest gift of grace" (Hase); but still, so long as the two are not identical, the question as to the connection and coherence of the two remains an open one, and easy as it is to show the weak side of the opinions of others, as difficult is it to give a solution which is safe from every attack. Reason is often relatively strong, as long as it considers a question from one side, but it generally is seen to be weak where the harmony of the two sides must be brought to view. Be a consistent Determinist, and you may let man's absolute dependence on God in the work of conversion have such play, that there is left no space whatever for any personal responsibility. Be an Indeterminist, and involuntarily your presentation of the Omniscience and Omnipotence of God is limited. Both standpoints have their relative rights; the first is Theological, and maintains the expression of religious feeling; the other is Anthropological, and finds its support in the unerring utterance of the moral consciousness. But these rights are overthrown, and become unjust, when the one is used not merely along with, but at the expense of the other. Determinism has a powerful ally in Logic, but in its consistent development it attacks the very depths of the life of man, his entire personality. It has with reason been complained that it does not honour any rights of conscience, and brings morality to nought. It undermines the doctrine not only of the imputation, but also of the imputability of the sinful act, and obliterates the external and unalterable distinction between good and bad. Determinism becomes Monism, and Monism evidently leads to the abyss of Pantheism. In the very charm it exercises on the thoughtful spirit that longs for unity, consists its peculiar power; it has something of that attractiveness which the eye feels as it gazes into space from the height of a lofty precipice. And yet no one can continue at this standpoint, who looks plainly at the realities of life. Conscience opposes with all its strength the absolute knowledge of Monism; it not only declares, but it also establishes, that we are something more than the machines of an absolutely irresistible force; it testifies that our moral condition is not merely our destiny, but the fruit of our own choice. But not less plainly does it testify to the fact that we in every part of our spiritual life are absolutely dependent on a higher power, and thus again it presents to us a question which it, as little as our intellect, solves to our complete satisfaction.

5. For these reasons we consider it impossible, but happily also not directly necessary, to overcome all Dualism in our thought upon this point. Unity of knowledge, purchased at the expense of conscience, is, in our estimation, bought too dearly. The higher unity between two factors, with each of which we are so imperfectly acquainted, must necessarily be beyond the reach of our vision. In Holy Scripture we meet with important expressions, which in a greater or less degree favour now one, now the other, of these presentations. Christian self-consciousness in the end undoubtedly testifies to the fact of the freedom on one side, and to the power of grace on the other, but it nowhere accurately defines the reciprocal relation of the two. If this is so in both cases, then are we as little at liberty to sacrifice the Theological to the Anthropological principle, as the opposite. It is both equally true, that man even in his spiritual life is dependent upon God, as that he retains the freedom of choice;

both equally untrue, that man is dependent, without being in his choice relatively free, or free without being absolutely dependent on the power of grace. We thus declare ourselves as opposed to Monism, and in favour of Dualism—not in the sense that we acknowledge the discord, but that we confess the twofoldness (the actual distinction) of grace and duty, of dependence and freedom. If this answer be not entirely satisfactory, our disappointment ceases, as we observe that it is the duty of self-denying theological thought, rather to recognise the existence of an unsolved problem, than to offer a solution, through which the difficulties become even greater, and—insuperable. We are the less ashamed of the confession, that in this domain the higher unity is beyond our reach; because the contradiction, at least in this sphere of our thought, finds a partial solution in our inner experience.

6. That experience, however, testifies by no means that we are then most free when we feel ourselves the least dependent, or that in consequence of a profound feeling of our dependence our personal freedom is lost; but, on the contrary, that grace does everything, yet never entirely without man; and again, that the Christian works out his own salvation, but only in the power of grace. The desire for, and the capacity to, redemption is a work of grace, but prepared in man in a purely psychological manner. Faith and conversion are gifts of grace, but in such wise that the sinner through them is made morally able for the act of faith and the work of conversion. The sanctification and preservation of the Christian is a work of grace, but in such a sense that it gives him the desire, courage, and power to purify himself, and to perfect his sanctification in the fear of God. Thus grace both sows the seed on the ground already prepared to receive it, and works like the sun, which gives growth to the seed. Nowhere is a germ of the new life quickened, but God has made the first advance to man; the reverse is never the case.[2] Flesh and blood offer resistance to the re-creating power of God, but the Holy Ghost calls into existence and strengthens in man that principle which opposes that resistance, and overcomes it, but often after a severe contest. Where by nature the right will is wanting, there He brings about and gradually strengthens that power of the will, by which, as by a holy spontaneity, we learn to do what God requires of us.[3] The true moral freedom of him who, brought out of the bondage of sin, dedicates himself entirely to the service of God, is alike the proper work and the fairest triumph of grace. Thus, from the beginning to the end, we see the two lines meet, touch, and even coincide; yet the one never blots out the other; and at that end God alone receives the honour of salvation, and yet the faithful combatant receives the crown, because he himself has willingly and readily fought: "Aguntur a *Deo*, ut agant *ipsi*, quod agunt."

7. Thus thought gains its light from experience, but that experience again urges to continued reflection; and difficult though it be to avoid offending in words, we must ever afresh continue to try that we may find a more adequate formula, at least one more approaching to truth, to express both the diversity and connection between the Divine and human

[2] Isa. lxv. 1. [3] Ps. lxxxvi. 11.

factors. More difficult, however, is it to give and apply here a perfectly clear and consistent representation, because man is not only in so many respects a mystery to himself, (rightly says Augustine, "*si cognoscerem me, cognoscerem et Te!*") and also, because—a fact which is frequently forgotten—there is such a great difference between the different individualities, which in their turn are brought under the operations of the grace of God. *Undoubtedly all have the same sinful heart, but even with the identity of nature the difference of personality is often so great, that that which is true of one is not on that account unconditionally applicable to the other.* In one, for example, the disposition offers more powerful opposition than in another, in whom the capacity for better impressions has gained the rule over the actually sinful will. This corner of the field is stony—that beset with thorns; in both the husbandman has a different course to follow. Nor must we overlook the fact, that even there, where the will is entirely led captive to the service of sin, intellect and conscience still remain as natural points of connection for the re-creating power of God. "It is the immanent grace in fallen human nature, that freedom can surrender itself to the grace which comes to meet it, and open itself, as the flowers open to the beams of the sun" (Martensen). This, however, is firmly founded on the basis of Scripture and Experience: where the resistance is overcome, God's grace alone deserves the praise; where it does not suffer itself to be conquered, this must be solely ascribed to man's own fault. If it does not seem possible to reconcile the one entirely with the other, then let the well-known rule be here repeated and affirmed: two propositions, each individually sufficiently established, do not cease to be true, even where we are not yet permitted to penetrate their mutual connection.

8. After this, no one can be surprised that we recognise and maintain the work of grace, no less than the claim of the Gospel, and yet are not inclined even in thought to sacrifice the one to the other. Undoubtedly the doctrine of the operation of grace by the Holy Ghost has been, and will be, misused in different ways. There is a spiritual pride, which extravagantly glories in the reception of the gifts of grace.[4] There is a blind fanaticism which is able to talk of absolutely immediate revelations and operations of God, and considers him who has not experienced these in a similar form, a child of darkness. There is a lethargic passivity, which thinks that it glorifies the grace of God best by waiting indolently for its operation. There is, not to mention more, a carelessness after a man thinks he has received the grace, which even misuses it in the service of licentiousness.[5] But all this proves absolutely nothing against the truth or value of this doctrine; it only proves that under the influence of the self-deceit of sin, even the good may become unto death, a fact of which no one has surely any doubt. It only increases our obligation so to present the doctrines of Grace and Duty in their mutual coherence, that not the slightest injury be done either to the power of God, or to the responsibility of the rational creature. We shall do this more successfully in proportion as the work of grace is better known to us, not merely by description, but also by our own experience. Where this is really done, there the recog-

[4] 1 Cor. iv. 7. [5] Rom. vi. 1.

nition of this truth leads us continually (*a*) to fervent thanks to God, who has thus provided for our greatest needs, not only by sending His Son, but also by the gift of His Spirit; (*b*) to persistent prayer for that strength which is only made perfect in deeply felt weakness;[6] (*c*) to unwearied diligence in the working out our own salvation, as well as that of others; (*d*) to a well-founded hope for the kingdom of God militant on earth;[7] and, in connection with these, (*e*) to a reverent glorifying of the almighty and free, and also all-wise and holy God, who thus accomplishes His design for the salvation of the *sinner* without ever treating the *man* as an instrument devoid of reason. Still there are left here mysteries which we cannot deny, and yet cannot solve; of the eternity, where grace will *reign* through righteousness,[8] we continue to hope for a perfect solution. The triumph of grace not merely *over* but *by* the freedom which she herself has bestowed and controlled, will undoubtedly one day be the burden of an endless song of praise. On earth, however, the striking words of Beets deserve to be kept ever in remembrance: "We cannot comprehend; enough that we apprehend." Apprehend, and you will comprehend as much as is necessary and possible!

Compare D. KOORDERS, *Diss. Theol. de pugnâ Theologiam inter et Anthropologiam* (1856); J. H. GUNNING, Jr., *Blikken in de Openb.*, ii. (1868), p. 266, *sqq.*

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

How can we explain the unmistakable superiority of the teaching of Augustine to that of Pelagius?—Whence comes the attractive power and constant revival of semi-Pelagianism?—Is it possible to rise entirely beyond the standpoint of Synergism?—How is it that the renewed struggle in the present century between Determinism and Indeterminism has borne so little fruit?—Is it just to accuse every one, who despairs of a complete solution of the great question, of inconsistency and incompleteness?—May we look for more light in the darkness from fresh and continued investigation?—Is freedom a bar to, or rather the fruit of, grace?—Distinction between *motus inevitabiles* et *irresistibiles*.—Is the relation between grace and freedom exactly alike in all?—Extent and foundation of, and antidotes to the misuse of, the doctrine of Grace.—Why is the accurate presentation of the work of Grace, in connection with the claim of the Gospel, of such preponderating import for the future minister of the Gospel?

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[6] Matt. vii. 11; Ephes. iii. 14—19. [7] Zech. iv. 6; John xvi. 8—11. [8] Rom. v. 21.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE CHURCH, OR THE TRAINING SCHOOL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

(ECCLESIOLOGY.)

SECTION CXXVII.—TRANSITION AND SURVEY.

THE contemplation of the Way of Salvation for the individual naturally directs our view to the communion of those who are called to walk in this Way, and who, combined one with another, enjoy the blessings of the Kingdom of God. In treating this subject, with which Ecclesiology has to occupy itself, we direct the attention consecutively first to the Christian Church itself, and then to the means of grace enjoyed in the communion of the Church.

1. The transition is soon made from subjective Soteriology to Ecclesiology. Here, too, is not merely a close, but a reciprocal, bond. The individual Christians, formed by the operation of the grace of the Holy Ghost, together make up an indivisible whole, and reciprocally, such a whole must exist, if new members are to be brought into it. The Holy Ghost unites believers together into one community, which soon rises as the visible Church; but on the other side, too, this Holy Ghost works in and by the Church in leading sinners to faith and conversion. For these latter reasons Ecclesiology might thus have even preceded the doctrine of grace; here, however, where this latter is already developed with regard to individual wants, the eye now naturally turns to the *congregatio sanctorum*, as an organic whole.

2. From an Evangelical Protestant *standpoint* Ecclesiology can never have entirely the same import as from the Roman Catholic. From the latter it stands in more direct connection with Christology and Soteriology, than on the former. For the strict Roman Catholic the Church is the visible continuation of what Christ was upon earth; the infallible mediator between God and man; the faithful mother, for whose sons there is neither

salvation nor holiness outside her pale. Her standard is, "Ubi Ecclesia, ibi Christus," while ours, on the other hand, declares, "Ubi Christus, ibi Ecclesia." Not to mention crypto-Catholic sympathies and tendencies in other places, it is well known that the strongest supporters of the Lutheran Reformation, even in our day, show not the smallest repugnance to this Romish conception of the Church. We need only point to the names and writings of Villmar, Löhe, Wangenmann and others in Germany, to show what we mean. With such an official zeal is this dogma, from the standpoint of the Reformed Church and of union in the higher sense of the word (which is ours too), never, so far as we know, discussed. It usually retires in a greater or less degree in other parts of Christian doctrine also; and however often in later time it has been mockingly declared, that a new development was required, hitherto but little relatively has been done on the part of the Reformed Church. We do not then say too much, when we complain, that on this domain there is still far too often a perfect Babel of tongues. The conception of the Church, her antiquity, her importance, her destiny and future, these are questions, with respect to which we not seldom meet with the most faulty and contradictory replies in the bosom of the same communion. Nor does the doctrine of the so-called Sacraments, or the other points more closely related to Ecclesiology, fare better; here and there are Augean stables, which need to be cleansed.

3. Indeed, the *importance* of Ecclesiology, which bids us undertake this Herculean task, must by no means be underrated. Great is its value for every member, but specially for every minister of the Church; markedly, too, for him, who in the spirit of the Reformation wishes to labour for the upholding of the Kingdom of God. That value is still increasing in our day, when the Church is here most violently resisted, and even surrendered as hopelessly lost and useless, while on the other hand the greatest good is expected from the maintenance and restoration of the Church as such. In the midst of Scepticism and Indifferentism, ecclesiastical questions seem almost everywhere to excite men's spirits and hearts; they lie at the root of every question in dispute; they have even here and there more actuality than the most important problems of Anthropology or Christology. Reason then enough is there not to withdraw with indifference, when Ecclesiology again becomes the subject of discussion.

4. Its *division*, in the sense we have thus signified, finds sufficient commendation in itself. The two so-called subdivisions are in some degree parallel to those of the preceding chapter. We spoke there of the claim of the Gospel on each individual separately, here we are treating of the union of those who have accepted that claim. There we glanced at the work of Grace, here we learn to know the different means by which the Holy Ghost accomplishes the work of Grace. In a word, the Church and the Sacraments must therefore consecutively occupy our attention. Only it might be a question whether it were desirable to invert our arrangement, and, following in the footsteps of some, *e.g.*, Strauss, Kahnis, etc., to treat first the rites of the New Covenant, and afterwards the Church, in which they are continually celebrated. It is evident this might be done; but certainly the arrangement of ideas which we have chosen, is recommended by its greater simplicity and naturalness.

5. The *peculiarity* of this entire chapter, as compared with others, consists specially in this, that the dogmatic investigation must here in an even greater degree show an exegetical and historical, than a properly so-called philosophic character. Christian philosophic thought is certainly inappropriate nowhere; but it must not be in any degree forgotten that we are called, not to undertake a journey of discovery like that of the Argonauts, but to understand and describe thoroughly, by the light of the Gospel and spiritual experience, that which has been historically given. It is not our task to construct *à priori* the idea of the Church, but to estimate the existing fact of the Church; not to develop an abstract theory respecting the requirements and operations of the Sacraments in the domain of the Church, but to place the simple rites of the New Covenant in the light in which they were brought by the Lord Himself and His first witnesses. Even the ecclesiastical dogma concerning the Church must be tested by the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament, and, if this is evidently necessary, must be changed according to them. Whatever may be the right or limit of speculative thought in other ways on subjects such as this, it has somewhat less room, than where, *e.g.*, the doctrine of God is treated; and even the Christian consciousness speaks, *inter alia*, with more tenderness and force concerning the doctrine of sin and grace, than where the subject of investigation is the question as to the relation between the visible and the invisible Church. Specially exegetically-historic in its nature, the question now to be discussed leads us as it were to the borders of that prophetic prospect, which immediately afterwards discloses to us Christian Eschatology.

Compare the treatise of N. C. KIST, *Over de Christel. Kerk op aarde*, which received the prize of *Teylers Godgeleerde Genootschap*, in 1850, and was published in the 30th part of his works, where also the principal literature of earlier date was mentioned (2nd edn., 1835); A. DIEMONT, *Disq. de Eccl. Christianâ e Christi mente.* (1844); an essay of J. WITKOP, in *Waarheid in Liefde* (1845), i.; in Germany, the monographs of ROTHE (1837), LOEHE (1845), DELITZSCH (1847), KLIEFOTH (1854), and others, mentioned by SCHENKEL, in his article *Kirche*, in Herzog, *R. E.*, vii., p. 560; also *Die Kirche, nach ihren Ursprung, ihre Geschichte, ihre Gegenwart, Vorträge von Luthardt, Kahnis, und Brückner* (1865); the successful prize essay of K. TRABITZ, *Das Wesen der Kirche* (1870); *Leidsche Doct. Dissertatien over de Kerk*, by J. A. BRUINS (1869), and J. VAN DEN BERGH (1870).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

How is the peculiarity of the different churches and congregations shown in their varying treatment of Ecclesiology?—The cause of so much error and confusion of ideas which is specially found in this domain.—Is it possible, in the present state of the Biblical Theology of the New Testament, to discover a firm basis for the dogmatic treatment of Ecclesiology?—The idolatry of the Church and the contempt of the Church of the present day.—What end must we keep specially in view in this part of our investigation?

FIRST DIVISION.

THE NATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

SECTION CXXVIII.—ITS ORIGIN.

THE Kingdom of God "cometh not with observation," but still cannot but eventually manifest itself in a visible form. Where the Holy Spirit unites the hearts, there a community must exist, from which will soon proceed a communion distinct from every other. Prepared for by the Theocracy of the Old Covenant, and more specially by the coming and work of Christ, it dates from the first Christian Pentecost, and is in the full sense of the word a creation of the Holy Ghost.

1. In the investigation into the origin of the Christian Church on earth a few remarks upon the *word* itself will not be superfluous. The original word ἐκκλησία was used by the Greeks of every assembly of the people called together by order of the magistrate (it is derived from ἐκκαλέω = *convoco*), the *convocata societas*. In the LXX. it is the translation of the Hebrew word קָהָל.[1] The Dutch *kerk* (kirche, kirk, church) is derived, not as some will, from the Hebrew word קָרָא = convocavit, but from the Greek word κυριακή, sc. οἰκία. Of this church as a whole the Lord speaks in Matt. xvi. 18; while in Matt. xviii. 17, He calls by the same name the ordinary assembly of His believers at a fixed place. This latter is, with an allusion to the corresponding religious assemblies of the Jews, also denoted by συναγωγή and ἐπισυναγωγή,[2] but the Christian Church as a whole is never described by these latter words. In the Pauline Epistles, which (specially those to the Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, and the Pastoral Epistles) are of the greatest significance for Christian Ecclesiology, the word ἐκκλησία is employed to denote either the Church universal,[3] or the local Church,[4] or that of the family;[5] and the community itself is sketched under a variety of images, borrowed at one time from the house, at another from the temple, or again from the body with its different members. But still there always remains the same fundamental idea of an organic whole, an association of believers of the Gospel, whose head is Christ, and which consequently exhibits a character which without Him it could not acquire.

2. The *existence*, indeed, of such a church on earth is not disputed

[1] Num. xvi. 3.
[2] Heb. x. 25; James ii. 2.
[3] Ephes. v. 23.
[4] 1 Cor. i. 2.
[5] Phil. 2.

by any one, and its *continuation*, notwithstanding the most vehement opposition, may well occupy our attention for a few moments. There does not exist upon earth a second association similar in every respect to this; its ideal even, in that large extent in which it is conceived in the Scriptures of the New Testament, and which is increasingly realised in the course of the ages, has never risen before the spirit of any individual teacher or founder of a religion. The schools of the Greek philosophers comprised only a few pupils; the brotherhood of the Pythagoreans did not long survive its founder; the Republic of Plato remained a dream; the Theocracy, established by Moses, dwindled after the Babylonian exile; the circle of John's disciples dragged on with difficulty their insignificant existence; the Christian Church stands there, alone and incomparable, like a building which stretches its wings to the uttermost corners of the earth, and rises supreme above every storm. "At the time of Voltaire and Frederick II., men looked for its dissolution; but it will still exist, when Voltaire's name will be utterly forgotten. At its commencement its youth was objected to; now it is its age; the truth is, that it possesses an eternal youth" (Luthardt). How can we account for its existence?

3. In treating of the *origin* of the Church we must carefully distinguish its psychological from its historical basis. In regard to the first, the religious principle, when sound and living, has already in itself an assimilating and associating character; it binds not merely man to God, but also men to each other. In the sacred records we see common worship mentioned, long before the rise of different nationalities.[6] He who has found and recognises truth in the highest domain, cannot refrain from imparting it to others; he who feels love, cannot possibly shut himself up in self. True, the Kingdom of God cometh not with observation,[7] but, like its King, it cannot be lastingly hid.[8] Even here, according to the well-known saying of the poet, is "corporeality the end of the ways of God," specially where His truth and grace have once been historically revealed. It appeared in Christ, and the personality of this Christ exercised an irresistible and attractive force on the susceptible soul. Round Him was gathered the first band of the disciples, which may be properly called a kind of Church, not merely gathered, but also most carefully formed by the Lord Himself.[9] Far from being scattered by His departure from earth, they continued with one accord to watch for the promised Holy Ghost;[10] and where He is poured out, there He soon makes for Himself a body in which He dwells and displays His power. Viewed in the light of history, the Church is thus a fruit of the appearance of Christ, and at the same time an infallible proof—whose Apologetic value is still too lightly estimated—of the mighty influence which He left behind in His immediate friends.

4. Thus to the so-called Church of the Old Covenant the Christian stands in very close connection, but still there is a real distinction between the two. As Christ was the fulfilling of Prophecy, so in a certain sense is

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[6] Gen. iv. 26. [7] Luke xvii. 20. [8] Mark vii. 24. [9] John xvii. 4—6. [10] Acts i. 13—15.

the Church the fulfilling of the Theocracy, though under an entirely different form. Thus we hear believers saluted even by the Apostles by the names given of old to the chosen people, and the Church described as the seed of Abraham, the spiritual Israel.[11] Paul in particular attaches importance to the fact, that the true justification of the sinner before God under the Old Covenant did not differ in principle from that of the Christian.[12] Our old Reformed theologians, too, often speak in preference of the Church of the Old Testament, to denote those pious worshippers of God, who were not wanting even in the darkest days.[13] In a like sense does the Heidelberg Catechism, in its 52nd answer, confess, "that the Son of God gathers to Himself His Church from the beginning to the end of the world." This expression would only then be literally correct, if the activity of the Logos before His Incarnation was then also contemplated. It is, however, certainly more exact, not to fix the date of the beginning of the *Christian* Church before the appearing of the historical Christ, even while we feel the inner conviction of a higher unity, which connects this Church with the people of God of the Old Covenant.

5. Already is it evident to what extent Christ may be said to have *founded* the Church upon earth. He—we use the word for the time in a very general sense—has plainly foreseen, willed, and repeatedly alluded to the Church.[14] He reckoned indeed on the victory of His cause on earth, and earnestly prayed for the unity of His believing ones.[15] Along with this, He enunciated great principles, powerful for uniting and associating His followers,[16] and ordained the institutions of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which were to serve to establish and extend it. Above all, He has made the founding of the Church possible, by the promise and gift of the Spirit, who was to guide the Apostles, conquer the world, and glorify Him.[17] But as the Founder, properly so called, of the Church, we can only designate the Holy Ghost, or, if we prefer it, the glorified Christ by the agency of the Holy Ghost. From the outpouring of the Spirit on the first Christian Pentecost the Church was really brought into life. Thus there is not *any* reason for denying the *Divine* origin of the Christian Church, though we do not for a moment deny that the Divine work of its founding was effected by means of men, viz., the first witnesses of the Lord.[18]

Compare R. ROTHE, *Die Anfänge der Kirche u. ihr. Verf.* (1837). i.; F. DELITZSCH, *Vom Haus Gottes* (1849); HARNACK, *Die Kirche, ihr Wesen, ihr Regiment* (1862); C. E. LUTHARDT, *Apologet. Vorträge*, ii. (1867), p. 110, *sqq.*; A. VAN TOORENENBERGEN, *De Kerk*, in *Waarheid in Liefde* (1867).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

What light does the Apostolic imagery throw on the nature and origin of the Christian Church?—Is there sufficient ground for regarding the Apostolate as an institution of Jesus Himself?—With what right is it asserted that the Christian idea of the Church is primarily a fruit of the Pauline conception of Christianity?—What do we learn from Acts ii. as to the rise and origin of the Church? and what judgment must we form of this narrative?—Why is it important to place the Divine origin of the Church directly in the foreground?

[11] Gal. iii. 8, 9; vi. 16.
[12] Rom. iv.
[13] 1 Kings xix. 18.
[14] Matt. xvi. 18; xviii. 17.
[15] John xvii. 20, 21.
[16] Matt. xviii. 15—17; xxiii. 8.
[17] John xvi. 7—15.
[18] Acts ii. 39—41; 1 Cor. iii. 9.

SECTION CXXIX.—ITS IDEA.

To obtain an accurate conception of the Christian Church, it is necessary that we distinguish properly between the ideal and the reality, between the inner nature and the external manifested form of the subject,—in a word, between Church and Congregation. Conceived as a moral religious society, the Church embraces, without exception, all who are called by the name of Christ; viewed as a spiritual body, the congregation is the union of those who by a living faith are personally united to Christ, whether they belong to the Church militant on earth, or to the Church triumphant in heaven (*Ecclesia militans et triumphans*). The distinction between the visible and the invisible Church is therefore correct in principle, and must be firmly held, as a matter of deep importance. Where it is arbitrarily drawn out into irreconcilable antithesis, sectarianism at once appears, which divides and weakens the Church, without being able to supply its place for a continuance.

1. For the question as to the accurate idea which we must form of the Christian Church, it is before all things necessary to make a distinction, which, though not actually demanded in the Scriptures of the New Testament, nor based on the word Church itself, has still in the course of time become of increasing importance; we mean the distinction between the Church as an external institution, and the congregation of the Lord as a living organism. In the first sense the Church embraces all who, in opposition to Heathen, Jews, and Mahometans, bear the name of Christians. That name, early given, and apparently by enemies, to the confessors of the Gospel,[1] and repeatedly mentioned in the Scriptures of the New Testament,[2] unites those who bear it, in the confession of one Lord, one faith, one baptism.[3] To this Church the different churches and communions belong, as the several provinces to a kingdom, or as the different stories and rooms to one and the same house, built on the same foundation.[4] It is like the mustard-seed, which grows into a large tree from a tiny beginning; like the net, which gathers in both bad and good fish. As an independent society of a moral religious nature in or by the side of, not unfrequently in opposition to, the state, it has its own laws, its own government, its own rights. Its members are as such not yet citizens of the kingdom of God, but must be regenerated and trained up within its bosom. Even where this is not effected by reason of their own fault, they

[1] Acts xi. 26.
[2] Acts xxvi. 28; 1 Pet. iv. 16.
[3] Ephes. iv. 4.
[4] 1 Cor. iii. 11.

continue nevertheless, in consequence of their baptism, members of the Church, even confessing members of the congregation to which they belong, so long as they do not withdraw themselves, or are not separated by others, as a measure of discipline, from its communion.

2. We come to a much sublimer presentment when we look upon the communion of true believers, as the spiritual body of Christ (*corpus mysticum Christi*). When in time past the Church appeared in the world, the world but too speedily crept into the Church in such a way that it gradually lost its spiritual character. Yet the Lord has, in all churches and denominations, those who truly know and love Him, and who, born again of the Holy Ghost, have entered into a personal relation to Him. In part they still fight on earth the good fight of faith (*Ecclesia militans*), in part they are and will be crowned in heaven as conquerors (*Ecclesia triumphans*). In the first-named respect this spiritual body is on its part the soul of the external corporation of the Church, which without this centre of life would quickly be dissolved, even though it might be for a time maintained in a sickly life by artificial regulations. This living community, which involuntarily reminds us of the parable of the leaven, is not merely the training ground of the kingdom of God, but the beginning of the revelation and realisation of God's kingdom here on earth. Whatever greatness or splendour is predicated of this last in the Gospel, is equally applicable to it; yea, it may be fully justified, that its members are represented as delivered from the power of darkness, and heirs of the inheritance of the saints in light.[5]

3. Are there, then, two Christian Churches on earth? By no means, but the one Church exhibits two very different sides, which may not be confounded, though they are most closely allied. The spiritual principle must come to light, as, and in, the churchly society; and conversely this latter has a higher value in proportion as it may be called a more exact expression and a truer revelation of the former. Thus we come, in other words, to the much-discussed distinction between the visible and the invisible Church, of which the proper meaning after what has been said is not obscure; but the *cause*, *basis*, and *significance* still require further indication.

4. As regards the first, it must at once be granted that this distinction was not made, or was scarcely made, by the oldest teachers and fathers of the Church. Generally we see that the dogma concerning the Church but slowly reached the desired development. As against its enemies, though not without some indistinctness, the highest eulogies were bestowed upon the Church as such. Thus Cyprian emphatically declared, "Qui Eclesiam non habet matrem, Deum non habet patrem." Tertullian called it "arca figurata," and Origen compared it to the house of Rahab at Jericho, outside which no one could be saved. He who endangered the unity of this visible Church had to dread the stern sentence, "hæreticus non est Christianus." Yet we may say that the distinction between the visible and the invisible Church, though not actually made, was yet prepared for by Novatianism and Montanism, which desired an "Eclesia vera, pudica,

[5] Col. i. 12, 13.

sancta virgo," and could not for that reason join the existing Church; even as Augustine afterwards owned that there were "many sheep without, many wolves within, the Church." But the development of the Hierarchy forced him and others to regard the outward Church, the aggregate of all the baptised, simply as *the* Church, and emphatically to maintain the rule, "habere caput Christum nemo poterit, nisi qui in ejus corpore fuerit, *i.e.*, in Ecclesiâ." In consequence of the increased secularising of the Church, its most valued principles of life were either hidden to a considerable extent, or, on due consideration, separated from the corrupt mass; and thus it might happen that the true Church was never more invisible than where the visible Church had reached the summit of splendour and power. In presence of its compact unity the Reformers had to reply to their opponents' oft-repeated question, Where were they and their allies before they had the boldness to break with the actual state of things? And a reply was only possible by distinguishing more sharply than had hitherto been done between the now forsaken external Church and a hidden invisible one, which had existed in every age, but at that very time was to be found in many, whom Rome was persecuting as heretics. In opposition to the excommunication of the Hierarchy, the consciousness that men belonged to a higher communion than this became an indispensable and invaluable solace, and we cannot be surprised that men soon felt an undeniable necessity for a sharper formulation of so true a distinction. This, it is true, is not so apparent in the Symbols of the Lutheran Church, in which neither of these names occurs, but it is only the more obvious in those of the Reformed Church, as well as in the private writings of the Reformers. In the conception of the Church, held by the Reformers, all emphasis is markedly laid, in connection with the doctrine of predestination, upon the confession of the invisible Church, as that which can be an object of faith, even where it is not seen. Cf., *e.g.*, *Neth. Conf.*, Artt. xxvii.—xxix.; *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 54; *Helv.* ii. 17. "Ecclesia invisibilis dici potest, non quod homines sint invisibiles, ex quibus colligitur, sed quod oculis nostris absconsa, Deo autem nota, judicium humanum sæpe subterfugiat." See also *Conf. Ang.* 19, *Scot.* 16, and specially Calvin, *Inst.* iv. 1, and in different places in his Catechism (1545).

5. We need scarcely call to mind the fact of the varying judgments passed upon, and even the misapprehension and misuse of, this distinction. Yet we do not hesitate for a moment to maintain it in principle, convinced that the *basis* upon which it rests is right and well-founded. The nature of the case already testifies, and every Christian conscience agrees, that there is an actual distinction between the Christian name and the Christian Faith, between a share in the privileges, and the fulfilling of the duties, of Christianity, whilst in itself the first remains of slight importance. The Gospel itself justifies our making this distinction, *e.g.*, in the parables of the tares among the wheat, the net, the guest without the wedding garment, the wise and the foolish virgins, as well as in such utterances as Rom. ix. 6; 1 John ii. 19; 2 Pet. ii. 20—22, etc. Finally, the history of every age proves that there are found without the bounds of the visible Church persons and sects who were, or comprised within themselves, living members of Christ; and that therefore a man may belong to the true Church

without belonging to the (visible) Church.—No objections can counterbalance such reasons, objections which depend in part at least on misunderstanding and exaggeration. The words *Invisible Church* have certainly a somewhat strange sound; but we have not to do with the actual words themselves, since they are not once met with in the Reformed Confessions, with the exception of the Scotch (1563), but rather with the fact which they denote. If it be said that the invisible Church is a pure ideal, like the Republic of Plato, it is forgotten that, even according to the Reformed Confession, it is not designed to remain invisible, but is to be visibly manifested. The great question is not, whether the Church is also visible—no one will deny this, and the Reformers loudly proclaimed it,—but whether only the visible Church may already be called *the* Church of Christ; in other words, whether the conceptions of Church and Kingdom of God are absolutely identical or not. If, as is done by Möhler, the distinction between Rome and the Reformation is so formulated that there the visible Church is first seen, and that afterwards the invisible one is found, while here it is exactly the contrary, we do not think it hard to prove that the motto "from within outwards," and not the converse, is certainly most in the spirit of the Lord and His Apostles. True, the last describe the whole visible Church as a communion of the elect and believing, but we must not forget the enormous difference of position and time, nor the striking words of 2 Tim. ii. 19, 20. (As Luther says, "Let him who will not err hold fast to this, that Christianity is a spiritual gathering of souls in one Faith, and that no one will be counted a Christian because of his body; let him also know that natural, proper, right Christianity is found in the spirit, and not in any external thing.") Such a distinction, far from being practically injurious, by promoting a fatal Indifferentism with respect to the visible Church, is exactly suited to arm us as well against all overrating, as also against every thankless ignoring of this last.

6. Thus the distinction here maintained ever retains its great *significance*. It is *dogmatically* important, because it is impossible without this distinction to attain to a clear and accurate conception of the Christian Church. Yet it cannot be denied that what Holy Scripture testifies of the Church of the Lord differs infinitely from what we see in the Church around us. The accurate distinction between the churchly society and the Church of Christ will first lead us to the right track. It is, moreover, of *Apologetic* value in the contest against Rome for existence, which the Protestant Churches will *never* for long be able to give up. Finally, the distinction has a *practical* side; since it preserves from self-deception and a false dependence upon mere external privileges;[6] it increases the desire to serve the Church of the Lord, and keeps us from despair, since for the present the outward Church suggests rather a ruin than a temple. Even in the diseased body is hidden a spirit, which is imperishable. For all these reasons it must never be forgotten that the Church is not only invisible, but also visible; not only visible, but also invisible. In the invisibility of the Church lies its Divine, in its visibility its human character; in the union of these two we see its Divine-human character, by which

[6] Jer. vii. 4.

it in its turn is not less distinguished than Christ and the Holy Scriptures, in which we observe the same peculiarity.

7. Care must, however, be taken, lest the legitimate distinction degenerate into an irreconcilable opposition, which can only work fatally. From it, indeed, springs Sectarianism, *i.e.*, the attempt to form parties, of which we have spoken before (§ xxvi. 6, 7). Even here a higher wisdom may cause good to come out of evil, yet that evil does not cease to be blameworthy. Conditions may undoubtedly arise in which it is permissible and fitting to leave a Church, and to establish a new association of those who entertain similar views. Yet where this, as in the case of the Reformers, is actually done for conscience' sake, there the new community is not so much *made* as gradually *born* of the course of circumstances and the impulse of the spirit, and for these very reasons differs in principle from the self-seeking formation of a sect. This latter, whether the degenerate Church finds a refuge in small conventicles, as, *e.g.*, among the Darbyites, or wishes to restore the visible Church in renewed splendour, as with the Irvingites, is usually a morbid phenomenon, which, though unconsciously, rises from a sad source, and leads to deplorable results. Sectarianism may do the Church as much good as evil, but usually it does not supplant it, and therefore will never survive it, unless the Church itself on its part become an unholy sect, bearing in itself the germ of dissolution. The war cry, Come out of Babylon, must therefore in most cases be regarded with distrust, and every apprehension of the idea of the Church, in which the true Church is not sought as far as possible in the existing community, must be combated as one-sided. The Church is neither entirely a field of thistles, nor a granary, but a field, where wheat and tares grow together until the harvest. The distinction between the two must be always remembered, but their separation must not be rashly attempted.

Compare P. T. ANDERSEN, *Das Protestantische Dogma von der sichtb. und unsichtb. Kirche* (1842); J. MÜLLER, *Die unsichtb. Kirche*, in the *Zeitschrift für Christl. Wissensch. und Chr. Leben* (1850), and published in his *Dogmat. Abhandl.* (1870), p. 278, *sqq.*; A. F. O. MUENCHMEYER, *Das Dogma von der sichtb. und unsichtb. Kirche* (1854), (a new-Lutheran view); and also A. RITZSCHL, *Stud. und Krit.* (1859), ii.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Difference and connection of the ideas of the Kingdom of God and of the Church.—The most ancient names of believers.—The idea of the Church of Cyprian and Augustine.—The importance of Donatism in principle.—Whence comes the almost entire ignoring of the distinction between Church and community especially in the Middle Ages?—The origin and development of the idea of the Church among the Reformers.—History of the conflict as to the distinction between the visible and the invisible Church from the time of Schleiermacher to the present day.—Whence does it come that there is still so much ignoring, and so much exaggeration, of this distinction?—The idea of the Church held by various sects at the time of the Reformation and in the present century.

SECTION CXXX.—ITS ATTRIBUTES.

The predicates of One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic, which have been ascribed to the Christian Church since the first centuries, express less what it really is, than what it must gradually become; and first attain to their full reality in that true invisible community which exists scattered amongst the various sections of the Christian Church, and which, guided, protected, and purified by the Holy Ghost, may at the same time be called in the true sense of the word Infallible, Imperishable, and the only Way of Salvation.

1. If the idea of the Church is determined, it can then be easily indicated how we must decide as to the different attributes, which in the course of time have been ascribed to it. The Apostles' Creed, after the "credo in Spiritum Sanctum," adds, "credo *Sanctam* Ecclesiam *Catholicam*, sanctorum communionem;" while the Nicene declares belief "εἰς μίαν, ἁγίαν, καθολικὴν καὶ ἀποστολικὴν ἐκκλησίαν." This œcumenical confession, which is still repeated and maintained, is, as regards the attributes here mentioned, entirely in accordance with what the Scriptures of the New Testament declare respecting the Church of Christ. See with respect to the first, Eph. iv. 3—6; to the second, 1 Cor. iii. 17; to the third and fourth, Eph. ii. 20; 1 Cor. iii. 11. Thus far none of the Apostles would have hesitated to subscribe unconditionally to the ecclesiastical *credo*.

2. It is, however, a different question, to what extent one of them would have still found in the Church of the fourth century the "pillar and ground of the truth,"[1] which Paul had declared the Church of the living God in his days to be. Thus much at least can hardly be denied, that the above attributes were transferred somewhat rashly, and without due limitation, to that ecclesiastical society which already, immediately after the Apostolic age, had begun to be formed, at first in subjection to, then under the protection of, and finally in independence of, or opposition to, the State. How quickly the attempt at spiritual unity was followed by a desire for outward unity by means of the Episcopate, and how much, after Ignatius and Tertullian, Cyprian and Augustine have contributed to the foundation of this building, cannot be here sketched more fully. Enough; the saying of the latter, "Non habent Dei caritatem, qui Ecclesiæ non diligunt veritatem," expressed the general feeling; and even the confession of the "communion of Saints," apparently inserted in the Creed through the influence of Augustine, and with a view to the Donatists, was only the indirect declaration of the obligation to cling to the churchly communion, out of whose pale it was not thought that salvation was possible. Notwithstanding all its defects,

[1] 1 Tim. iii. 15.

this Church was still regarded as *holy*, while the wicked within her bosom were considered like the corrupt juices present in the human body. In reply to the objection, that a Church in which so much impurity was found, could not possibly be the true one, men sought to shield themselves by the application of ecclesiastical discipline, and also by expecting from heaven what earth did not supply here. "Non sic accipiendum, quasi jam *sit* sancta, sed quæ præparatur *ut* sit" (Augustine). The distinction already noted between the Church militant and triumphant, acquired naturally from this point of view additional importance; and the boast of *Catholicity*, which was claimed for the first, could the less be surrendered, since the word *catholic* had soon lost its original meaning of *universal* (for in this sense the Protestant speaks of the Evangelical Catholic Church of the future), and was used, instead of it, to denote a pure and standard orthodoxy, so that catholic belief gained a similar meaning to orthodox faith. That orthodoxy however could only establish its claim by an appeal to the *Apostolical* character of the Church, which was learned from its accordance with the doctrines and Church system of the Apostles, according to the united testimony of Scripture and experience. Hence it was thought of the utmost importance to be able to establish the connection of the Church of the country or the See of the Bishop with the original Apostolate, while an authority, superior to all others, was definitely ascribed to "the Cathedra Petri," upon which men in the end made even the recognition of the authority of the Gospels dependent.

3. It is evident, without more extended demonstration, that none of these attributes can be fully applied to the Church of Rome. Where is her unity? Look at the Gallican Church, at Jansenism, at the supporters and opponents of Papal Infallibility, and the latest illusion fades away. What of her sanctity? Let the scandalous records of the Vatican and the monastic institutions testify. And as to her Apostolic character? Nowhere is the great subject-matter of the Epistle to the Romans more forgotten than in Rome itself. Indeed, the name of *Roman* Catholic tells of a limitation, which makes absolute Catholicity absolutely impossible; and the degenerate mother-church is Christian only in so far as she still holds fast to the chief truths, which are denied by Rationalism to its own injury and disgrace. Do not fancy, however, that even without Rome an ecclesiastical institution could exist, which could adorn itself with these names of honour on any better grounds. Nothing would be easier than to demonstrate, that almost everywhere is found the saddest discord, impurity, and denial of Apostolic doctrine. It is evident, that, whatever Church we may look at, there is in many respects a melancholy difference between any organised church-body and the living community, the bride, and the body of the Lord. But it thence follows inevitably, that these four predicates in all their force are applicable not so much to the first as to the last. Undoubtedly there is in every ecclesiastical institution a certain striving after unity, purity, catholicity, by its connecting itself with Apostolic testimony. Even unbelieving teachers try to conceal as long as possible their denial of the truth by an appeal to the Scriptures of the New Testament. But what is all this as compared with that which we see in the living Church of the Lord of all times and places! However imperfect, there is really a

unity, for which the Son of the Father once prayed;[2] there in principle a sanctification of the whole, and of the parts, as these are already perfect together in Christ, their glorified Head;[3] there a universality, notwithstanding every variety, in consequence of which Christ remains, in the fullest sense of the word, all to each of His believing ones;[4] there, in a word, an inner coherence with the Apostolic conviction of faith, in consequence of which it is always the same truth, which is continually expressed in different forms. Of this great community is it true, "Ecclesia dicens *nove*, nunquam dicit *nova*" (Vincent of Lerins). Yea, all may to a certain degree be asserted of it, which the Church of Rome, not without ridiculous exaggeration, claims exclusively for herself.

4. This Church of believers also is in the long run *infallible*, as to the great subject-matter of the Gospel of salvation. Experience teaches that even sincere Christians may err, but also, that the Word and Spirit of truth preserve them from continuing in an error, which would be fatal to their eternal peace. This is the profound sense of the words of John xvi. 13, and 1 John ii. 20, 27; and is often confirmed in simple believers in the most striking manner. "Ecclesia Dei—non errat, quamdiu innititur Petræ Christo, et fundamento Profetarum et Apostolorum" (*Conf. Helv.* ii., c. 17). By a sort of spiritual feeling, which naturally requires sharpening and purifying, the Church of the faithful can, even though it be sometimes darkly, nevertheless surely, distinguish what is of the truth, and what is against the truth.[5] Just because it enjoys the possession of an objective, eternal truth, even though as yet it apprehends it but too imperfectly, it must therefore from its nature oppose all lying and unrighteousness, as in irreconcilable opposition with its principle of life. Indeed, the "Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus" is here the holy truth; men must belong to the little flock, if they will upon sure grounds solace themselves with the promise of salvation.[6] The community of the saints is *saving*, not because every one is saved, whom it arbitrarily declares saved, but because he may be sure of his salvation, who knows himself to be a living member of the *corpus mysticum*. Yea, even the attribute of indestructibility (*perennitas*), may be ascribed to it, since it is like the house founded on the rock. It is plain that no mere local or national Church, as such, has the promise of the life to come. How many a candlestick, which before had given a brilliant light, has been removed out of its place![7] The edifice of the Hierarchy, though rejoicing in its centuries of existence, is shaken to its foundation, and just as little shall our diseased and divided Protestantism be the Church of the future. But concerning the Catholic (Universal) Church in the highest sense of the word it continues true, that "Christ is an eternal King, who cannot be without subjects" (*Neth. Conf.*). But this is naturally the case only in so far as it really lives, and fights, and is a "Church of knightliness," and not an immovable petrifaction of its own glorious past; but then also certainly, because the living Head imparts to His spiritual body something of His own indestructibility, and can

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[2] John xvii. 20, 21.
[3] Col. ii. 10.
[4] Col. iii. 11.
[5] Phil. i. 9—11; John x. 4, 5.
[6] Luke xii. 32.
[7] Rev. ii. 5.

never forget His own words.[8] The more a Church gathers into its bosom of such living members, the closer does it approach to the Ideal, which is denoted by the words *One, Holy, Universal, Apostolic, and Christian;* and that, even the smallest society need as little consider unattainable, as the greatest may ever boast that it has already attained it. In this sense it is true "the diversity of Churches is for God only a diversity of tongues."

Compare D. CHANTEPIE DE LA SAUSSAYE, *Gedachten over het wezen, en de behoefte der Kerk* (1855); SCHMIDT, *Des Augustin's Lehre von der Kirche*, in the *Jahrb. für deutsche Theol.* (1861), ii.; K. HASE, *Handb. der Protest. Polemik gegen die Röm. Kath. Kirche* (1871), p. 3, *sqq.*; F. G. SMITS, *Epistola ad Papam Pium IX.* (1869). Upon *Exclusivism*, as inevitable from the standpoint of solid Faith, an excellent sermon of A. MONOD, in his *Sermons*, iii., 2 (1860), p. 360, *sqq.*

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

The principle of the effort for ecclesiastical unity.—Whence the mention of the "communion of Saints" in the Apostles' Creed? and what is the significance of these words?—How is it that both the Romish and Protestant Churches often display attributes contrary to those which are required?—The idea of the Church held by the Greek Church, and the Quakers.—Degree, basis, and importance of the "falli nescia" of the invisible Church.—Is it possible to be positively Christian, without being at the same time in a certain sense exclusive?—When does Exclusivism become not a principle of life, but an evidence of disease?

SECTION CXXXI.—ITS IMPORTANCE.

The significance of the existence and communion of the Church, alternately over-valued and ignored, is apparent from what has been said. As a visible society the Christian Church is the invaluable means whereby to bring the individual and mankind to the citizenship of the Kingdom of God. As a spiritual body it is a fruit and evidence of the bond which connects each believer with Christ, and with Christ's people. In both respects it is the glorious scene of the continued government of Christ. Incontestable therefore is the obligation of Christians to join themselves to the true Church, and in spite of Indifferentism on the one hand, and Separatism on the other, always to continue to prize it.

1. What significance must be attached to the Church of the Lord, whose origin, nature, and attributes we have thus far examined? This question arises spontaneously, and the investigation may the less be withheld, because the matter which occupies our attention, like so many others, has

[8] Matt. xvi. 18.

been alternately over-valued and ignored in earlier and later times. The manner in which the faithful son of the Romish Church regards and treats his "dear mother" may serve to prove the first, while the Protestantism of later days in particular must entirely plead guilty to the second. The early Socinianism had already distinguished itself by its great dogmatic indifference with respect to the Church, and the Rationalism of the preceding and present centuries has not better acquitted itself. But even "Pietism" in the Lutheran Church, and Sectarianism in the Reformed, has usually occupied with regard to the "official" Church a position of distrust, not to say one of hostility; and any one knows with what unbecoming superciliousness in our days even beardless boys speak of the Church, and everything connected with the Church. Just as in the days of Jeremiah[1] it was said, "This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after," so now many turn with cold indifference from the Church, while in others again hatred makes way for scorn. The Church has a hard struggle indeed against many believers, who look down with haughty disdain upon the external institution, that has indeed nothing more to give them; and not less against so many unbelievers, who do not now cry, "Christianos ad *leones*," but rather, "Christianos ad *idiotas*." The atmosphere of our century, certainly in no less degree than that of any of its predecessors, is thick with anti-churchly elements; and the increase of Individualism, even in the moral and religious domain, cannot but be fatal to all communion of spirit. In such a condition an apology for the Church is certainly not less applicable and important, than one for Christ and Holy Scripture.

2. Even as an external organisation has the Church for centuries rendered an eminent service to the moral and religious civilisation of mankind, which can hardly be too highly praised. In the state and in society, in private and public life, it has cultivated true refinement, as nothing else ever did. Its first Apologists were the strongest promoters of a freedom of conscience and religion, which is now justly recognised by mankind as its inalienable right. It has mitigated the evils of slavery, sanctified marriage, and given to art and science an infinitely higher aim than it ever had before. For its systematic opponents one need, in Christian revenge, wish no other lot than life in a society entirely free from ecclesiastical influence. Certainly, we may do away with our churches, but then we must also enlarge our asylums and prisons. We may reject the Church as an enemy to civilisation and progress; but then we must expect all the blessings which are to be looked for from the emancipation of the flesh. Without Religion mankind becomes brutal; Religion without a Church is in the long run inconceivable, and it cannot be expected that the state will accept and carry out the task which the Church justly regards as exclusively its own. That modern society is withdrawing itself from the influence of the Church, is a fact; but it is not yet in any degree demonstrated, that it can really outgrow that influence. Even the most advanced Christian as yet has no right to look down with indifference on the degenerate Church, from whose hand he has in any case received the Gospel, and in whose bosom he was born again to new life.—Specially of the

[1] Jer. xxx. 17.

invisible Church is it true, that it is the light and salt of the earth, the merciful Samaritan to the miserable and suffering world. No communion is of higher worth than the mutual communion of the saints (*Heid. Cat.* Ans. 55; comp. 1 Cor. xii. 12—26). The entire Church, as it becomes visible upon earth, deserves to be called even in the sight of heaven a continual revelation of the manifold wisdom of God.[2] The preservation, purification, and perfection of this Church is the sphere of the government of Christ (§ cxiii. 6). Hence, too, the great power of attraction, which the history of the Church has for every believer, specially when it is viewed with the eye and heart of a Neander.

3. In the great importance of the Church for each individual, and for the great whole, is rooted the personal obligation not to continue alone, but to join oneself to that Church, which, after due investigation, one has recognised as true, and to remain in its communion. This obligation is demonstrated with reason (*Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxviii.; *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 55). It is based on the words and example of the Lord and His Apostles, who continued as long as they possibly could in the exercise of religious communion with their very degenerate countrymen, and expressly insisted upon confession of the truth and mutual association.[3] The efficacy of brotherly communion in consolation and sanctification is too great to be given up without injury, and the desire for a personal separation with one's religious convictions is a dangerous symptom of disease. Hence, too, Separatism is inadmissible, though separation for conscience' sake may in some cases be admissible and even necessary. Usually it springs from impure motives, and is in its nature not only anti-ecclesiastical, but acosmic; since it overlooks the importance of the Church as such for the world, and, where it lays too great stress on its own intellectual conception of truth, inevitably bears in its bosom the seeds and germs of new separations and divisions, which, however, in their effect—and this is the better side of the matter—are less fruitful to the sect, than to the Church. But Indifferentism is, and always will be, a still more terrible foe, which only therefore does not any longer combat the Church with a deadly hate, because it secretly hopes that, even without the sword, the Church will soon perish. That death, if it were possible, would be nothing less than the death-blow to mankind, and could be remedied only by a new outpouring of the Holy Ghost, such as is given in the Church. It is therefore an encouraging sign of the times that at any rate here and there in the theological world, and specially since the period of Schleiermacher, the value, not merely of the dogma, but of the fact of ecclesiastical communion is recognised more than it formerly was, but it is at the same time desirable that it should be valued still more highly. Not the assailants, but the builders, of the Church are alike the friends of God, and the deliverers of humanity.

Compare J. H. REDDINGIUS, *Het belang der kerk voor Evangel. Chr. zielkundig aangewezen* (1841); J. J. VAN OOSTERZEE, *Oratio de Religione Christianâ, optimâ veræ Humanitatis Magistrâ* (1869), and the literature so abundantly mentioned there; J. CRAMER, *Christendom en Humaniteit* (1871); E. RENAN, *La Réforme intellectuale et morale de la France* (1871), p. 317, *sqq.*; a striking tribute from the side of unbelief to the

[2] Eph. iii. 10.

[3] Matt. x. 32, 33; Rom. x. 9, 10; Heb. x. 25.

beneficial influence of the Church. With respect to Individualism and its injurious effects must the *Ethik* of MARTENSEN be specially consulted (1871, p. 291, *sqq.*); this work from the standpoint of Vinet deserves the most serious consideration,

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

What is the reason why the due estimation of the Christian Church through every age has always been so defective?—What answer must we make to the principal accusations which in our day have been made against the Church as an Institution and an Organism?—Meaning and value of the words of the Apostle (Ephes. iii. 10).—The prophetical significance of the Evangelical Alliance.—How far are the members of the Church to blame for the obstinate ignoring of the Church?—Christian Communism and the Commune.—How can the powerful influence of Individualism be turned to the benefit of churchly communion?

SECTION CXXXII.—THE TRUE CHURCH.

A perfect Church is not to be found anywhere on earth, but the relative superiority of one communion over another cannot be denied. A communion will stand higher, and deserve a more certain preference, in proportion as its whole disposition and organisation exhibits more indubitable evidence of its subjection to the Word and Spirit of Christ, and of its co-operation towards the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth, in which every variety leads to fuller development. From this standpoint, the choice to him who confesses the Gospel in the spirit of the Reformation, cannot be difficult, nor can his vocation be doubtful.

1. The question where we are to look for the *true* Church of Christ on earth, after all that has been said, presents itself so spontaneously, that it would be almost impossible entirely to avoid it in our treatment of Ecclesiology. It perhaps might be disavowed, with the declaration that the question is unimportant in itself, and, even if not so, that an answer is impossible. But neither the unimportance nor the impossibility could be maintained. It is not true—except from the standpoint of absolute Indifferentism—that all Churches may be called equally good, that is, indeed, equally bad; and still less, that the preference given by men to one over another is dependent on mere subjective taste. Choice is certainly here subjective, as in every other domain, but it may nevertheless be directed by an objectively fixed principle. A perfect Church, indeed, does not exist anywhere upon earth, just as there is no perfect knowledge of God, nor any perfect Christianity. But nevertheless the true, though imperfect Church may be sought for, not in the absolute, but in the relative, sense of the word. It is self-evident that in this sense we speak of the

visible, not of the invisible Church, and that here the question is to be answered, what must be the means among so many different Churches, each claiming for itself the superiority over others, to enable us to distinguish the most true, *i.e.* best?

2. The criterion by which the true Church will be recognised must not be fixed by our self-will, still less be derived solely or chiefly from the actual condition of the community to which the arbiter belongs. The first condition is indeed self-evident, but the second is too frequently forgotten to render it unnecessary to recall it here to mind. Many an Apologist of the Romish Church, for example, derives the criteria of the true Church from what he observes in his own surroundings, tests them by this, and gains naturally by this method a result, which can be counted upon beforehand, and for this very reason has not the slightest value. Cardinal Bellarmine (*De Ecc.* iv., c. 3) laid down no less than fifteen criteria by which the true Church must be recognised, *e.g.*, 1, ipsum Catholicæ Ecclesiæ nomen; 2, antiquitas; 3, diuturna neque unquam interrupta duratio; 4, amplitudo seu multitudo vere credentium;[1] and, not to mention any more arbitrary requirements, 14, infelix exitus adversariorum ecclesiæ; 15, felicitas ecclesiæ temporalis. Not to say that the two last criteria at any rate, even if they were tenable, would in our days prove much more against than in favour of the Church of Rome, it is evident to every one that the learned author was simply thinking of the position of the Romish Church of his days, and had thus in his own peculiar way justified what he already held, prior to any investigation. A Church, oppressed for a time, may find with at least equal justice the credentials of its excellence in its "infelicitas temporalis!" No one is convinced by such reasonings, except he who has never doubted. The true Church can only be that of which it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that it is in accordance with the Word and Spirit of truth; the best Church, that one which may be called the purest revelation and the most effectual school for the inner life of believers. The words of the Lord in Luke vi. 46, are applicable to the Church as well as to the individual. It thus becomes simply the question which Church among the different ones departs least from, and approaches most closely to, that which was prescribed by Jesus Himself as the fundamental basis of the mutual communion of its confessors. To the question, thus presented, the answer cannot be impossible.

3. A Church will stand higher in proportion as it *confesses* more purely the truth, according to the canon of the Gospel. The Lord Himself enforces this confession;[2] and this requirement is so absolutely inseparable from a sound life of faith, that the maxim, "No Church without a confession," is almost equivalent to an axiom. Even though the confession were not once needed in order to furnish a satisfactory answer to the "*dic cur hic*" of its opponents, it would be a necessity and joy, if Christ be really alive in the heart.[3] A mere statutory Church, which combines and admits the most incompatible elements, provided only that all submit to certain administrative ordinances, does not at all deserve the name of a well-ordered society, still less that of a Church. By this method the

[1] Compare, *e.g.*, Matt. vii. 13, 14! [2] Matt. x. 32, 33. [3] Acts iv. 20; 1 John iv. 15.

Church of the New Testament is not brought out of, but back to, the standpoint of the Law; and, while even the mockery of the Gospel is permitted in the name of freedom, a Talmud of human ordinances, which becomes in the end intolerable, is laid upon her weary shoulders. Undoubtedly there may exist in a Protestant Church a certain, even relatively great, degree of freedom of doctrine; but absolutely unlimited liberty of dogma is an impossibility from an ecclesiastical standpoint. If agreement in everything is impossible, agreement at least in something is a necessity; and even if nothing else but the confession of "the grace of God in Christ, as the sole ground of salvation," were thought necessary, still it is transparent that the Church which will not commit suicide, cannot continually admit in its bosom what is in irreconcilable antagonism in principle with this confession. The Church may indeed concede the liberty to revise its Confession, but not to contradict or to destroy it in its own name; all, indeed, seek, but all cannot possibly find, when they start from principles thoroughly anti-ecclesiastical. With reason therefore did the Augsburg Confession describe the Church as a "congregatio sanctorum, in quâ Euangelium recte docetur et rite administrantur Sacramenta," and the Netherlands Confession, Art. xxix., mentions, as a characteristic of the true Church, "the pure preaching of the Gospel, and administration of the Sacraments, as Christ has ordained them." If at the time of the Reformation this supplement was necessary in consequence of the violent dispute concerning the Sacraments, it may now be safely considered as subordinate to the first, or better, as already comprehended in principle therein. But the first must continue applicable in all its force, and no Church can be the true one which, as a Church, contradicts the Gospel of Christ in its essence and substance. If it be said that this essence and substance are differently understood, we do not deny it, but we ask, are there then no absolutely trustworthy hermeneutic rules? and would not the decision of many a disputed point be notably simplified if it were submitted to absolutely impartial judges outside the community? Certainly, where the transgressor must act himself as judge, a righteous sentence cannot be expected; but so long as a healthy intellect and conscience still possess any voice in the matter, it will be true, even in the domain of the Church, that a kingdom divided against itself cannot possibly stand, and still less serve as the ideal for other governments.

4. A Church will rank higher in proportion as the truth confessed by it is more closely *experienced* and *practised*. Rightly does the Gospel attribute the highest value to this;[4] while Calvin, too, mentions next to the criterion of "*fidei professio*," that of "*vitæ exemplum*." In a like spirit does the Netherlands Confession in its 29th Article declared that they who are of the true Church are recognised by this, that they "flee from sin, and follow after righteousness, love the true God and their neighbour, depart not to the right hand nor to the left, and crucify the flesh with its works." And this is reasonable, since practical desertion of God is not less destructive to the Church than theoretical denial or scepticism, and holiness may be called the greatest ornament of the house of the Lord.[5] Hence a fitting system of churchly oversight and discipline undoubtedly belongs to the ideal

[4] Matt. vii. 21; 2 Tim. ii. 19.

[5] Ps. xciii. 5.

of a properly organised Church. The nature of these regulations, and the manner of their practical application, is a subject which does not belong to this place. Here the principle only is in question; and thus it stands an incontestable rule: a Church in which in the moral domain all the bonds of discipline and order are rent asunder, can as little be called the true Church as a household without oversight and guidance may be called a model for a Christian family. Circumstances may undoubtedly arise in which the application of this rule is for a time interfered with, though for these reasons alone the Church has not yet ceased to be relatively true. But the principle itself cannot be surrendered, unless the Church with her own hand strikes the attribute Holy from her titles of honour, and becomes the slave of a world which it was her duty to conquer for her lawful Master.

5. More still! A Church will the more deserve the name of the true Church in proportion as it maintains the truth with greater force, and is concerned in its extension. On this point we find proof in the Gospel;[6] and if the Symbolical Writings make no further mention of this criterion, it is because the age of the Reformation was not yet an age of Missions. Besides, it is sufficiently evident from the nature of the case, that the servant who buries his talent in the earth is inferior to him who puts it to use and profit; and equally so, that he who is really light in the Lord will even involuntarily cause his light to shine before the world. A Church in which the missionary spirit is not living and growing cannot possibly be the true, *i.e.*, the living one; and on the contrary, even a small Christian community, like the Moravians, will reach a high eminence when in its missionary work it develops a peculiar energy and efficacy. Missions are, indeed, not merely the means for the salvation of the world, but for the self-preservation and perfection of the Church: the life which does not impart itself to others, quickly pines, and in the end is lost. Only let the Church take care that it seek not so much to plant in the field of the heathen world its own churchly peculiarity, but rather the Kingdom of God itself, remembering that the Gospel is not a Gospel of the Church, but of the Kingdom. Missions are excellent, even in the ecclesiastical domain, but only the missions which are accompanied with real union and continual reformation.

6. Therefore, finally, a Church deserves the higher praise in proportion as it strives after fresh *union* with all who believe, and shows plainly that it is concerned about its own progressive *reformation and perfection*. Indeed, even the best Church is merely a means to a higher end, the Kingdom of God, which is gathered not out of one single Church, but out of all the Churches of the earth. Hence it follows that a Church which knows no higher aim than that of reproducing its past in its present form, and of keeping its present as far as possible free from all spiritual churchly influences external to itself, stands perhaps high in the abstract churchly sense, but in the Christian still relatively low; since it suffers itself to be guided by a narrow principle of self-preservation *quand même*, to which sooner or later the words of the Lord in Matt. x. 39 will be seen to apply. The true Church cannot possibly be that which builds up as high as it

[6] Matt. v. 13—16; 1 Pet. ii. 9.

can, and maintains, the walls of separation between it and other Churches, but that alone which, with every proper estimation of churchly peculiarity, promotes Christian unity. Regarded from this point of view, the attempt at union made by the two principal divisions of the Church in Germany in 1817, was a work pleasing to God; while, on the other hand, the systematic effort to destroy that work, and at any cost to remain a "separate Church," even refusing the communion to brethren of a different view, exhibits the character of unspiritual retrogression. Certainly no precipitate Syncretism of that which is internally distinct, can be a blessing to the Church; but still less does the kingdom of God come by the egotistical sacerdotal cry, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these."[7] The attempt to be and remain continually something alone, causes, in the ceaseless change of wants and conditions, the Church to become a petrifaction of itself, which loses in life what it gains in durability; and in the end it drags on an existence without any *raison d'être*. This danger is specially threatening to the smaller communities, which often continue to exist as such solely for administrative or financial reasons, while the dogmatic sympathies or antipathies, which gave birth to this community, have long since been removed or have disappeared. The true Church is that which does not wish to prolong its existence as a separate Church one instant longer than is beneficial to its ideal, the kingdom of God on earth. Yet that ideal is as little attained without a constant reformation of the lawfully, but still imperfectly, existing one, which at the same time puts an end to the sad deformation of so much that is good in it. The true Church will therefore be just that which shows that it feels most need of constantly progressive perfecting, both as regards its insight into Christian truth and the practice of Christian life, though it must in this case always take care not to lose sight of the distinction in principle between Reformation and Revolution.

7. If each of the proposed criteria is properly established, then it is easily seen for what reasons the Evangelical Church merits the preference before the Roman Catholic, whatever may be the high claims which even in our day this latter continues to set up. Indeed, we saw it at the beginning, and shall be still more convinced of it; the reasons which Rome puts forth for its ecclesiastical pre-eminence cannot be sufficiently demonstrated; and however imposing its inexorable consistency may in a certain sense show itself as contrasted with the internal discord of so many other churchly systems, what profits it, so long as it wants the royal diploma of the Highest Truth! "The certainty of the truth is not a question of right, but a question of conscience. I must be certain of the truth within, and not without, my heart. Truth demonstrates itself not by its position, but by itself. The certainty of the truth is a work of the Holy Ghost. But He does not proceed by means of a juristic logic, but replies to the inquiry of conscience, as to the salvation of the soul" (Luthardt).—But as little need we shut our eyes to the relative superiority of one section of the Evangelical Church over another. Certainly, all are "joint forces" in the common conflict with Rome and unbelief. The

[7] Jer. vii. 4.

sons of the same house should and must forget their own differences more and more; and if Rome was wise and really specially anxious for the honour of Christ, it must offer to all living Christians a hand in the joint battle against anti-Christendom. But the estimation of each other's gifts does not on that account exclude the recognition of peculiar privileges, and we need not yet overlook the peculiar *Charismata* of the Lutheran Church, in order to show with an easy and good conscience a lasting preference for that of the Swiss Reformers and their allies. Even where we still place ourselves always on the side of the latter, and thus prefer to see in the Reformed Church the true in the relative sense of the word, still it is self-evident that we are not now thinking of her present chaotic condition, but of her original basis, her peculiar spirit,—in a word, of the essential substance of her glorious confession; while we must never forget that the recognition of her superiority in this sense must not lead to unspiritual arrogance, but much more to humble gratitude, industrious zeal, and increased fidelity.

8. The *vocation* of those who belong to this Church, and wish to try and serve it truly, according to the will of the Lord, after what has been said, can no longer be a subject of contention, but only of earnest care. He who really wishes well to her, is obliged—except he will desert her—to hold fast to the subject-matter of her confession, to watch over her interests, and above all to take care, not merely that she becomes again what she *was*, or continues what she *is*, but specially that she may become what *she is not yet*, and what she ought to be; a Church in every sense transformed, reformed after the Word and by the Spirit of the Lord; a fruitful nursery for, nay, a flourishing portion of, the kingdom of God on earth; in a word, an Evangelical Catholic Church, which by her Reformed attributes is not hindered, but rather forced, to serve others also with her rich gifts, as she in her turn, with a view to her own perfecting, profits by all that is beautiful and good which the Lord has given to other sister Churches. The "Christianus mihi nomen, Reformatus cognomen" must remain the motto of all who comprehend her *real* interests, and those of the kingdom of God; the reverse can never be right. When *the Church* as such becomes the highest aim and object of life for its servants, the kingdom of God suffers incalculable loss. Yet these things lead spontaneously to the discussion of further questions.

Compare in reply to MOORE'S renowned *Travels of an Irish Gentleman in search of a Religion* (1829), written in favour of Catholicism, the *Nieuwe Reizen enz.* of J. C. W. AUGUSTI (1834), and the *Reizen van een Saks. Edelman tot opsporing der ware Godsdienst*, by G. F. H. RHEINWALD (1836); A. DES AMORIE V. D. HOEVEN, Jr., *Aphorismen over het goede in de R. C. eerdienst*, in *Proza en Poezij* (1850), p. 3, *sqq.*; D. SCHENKEL, *Gespräche über Protestantismus und Katholicismus* (1852); J. I. DOEDES, *Oratio de libertate cum Ecclesiæ, tum Theologiæ strenue vindicandâ* (1865), and the controversial writings connected with it; J. J. VAN OOSTERZEE, *Reformatie en Revolutie*, fifty aphorisms (1867). [Eng. Trans. Chicago.] The extent and development of crypto-Catholic and Puseyite eccentricities in the Old Lutheran party in Germany in late years is seen, *inter alia*, in Herzog, *R. E.*, vii., p. 594.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

The cause of the great variety of feeling as to the "true Church."—Why is it impossible

for the Romish Church to adorn itself with this name?—What is the peculiarity of the Reformed Church, as distinguished from that of the Lutheran?—History and value of the principal ecclesiastical attempts at union in later days.—Is the attempt of Church restoration on the old foundation to be unconditionally assented to?—To what Church will the future in the end belong?

SECTION CXXXIII.—CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

The supreme government of the Christian Church rests solely with the glorified Lord of the Church, who as such does not need any visible representative on earth; but labours for its spiritual guiding and restoration, by teachers and overseers ordained by Him, and wills that under their government "all things should be done decently and in order."[1] Hence the Hierarchical, as well as the Democratical, tendency of spirit in this domain is in principle condemned by the spirit of the Gospel and Protestantism.

1. The Christian doctrine of salvation now gradually approaches in our investigation the limits of Church History, and Church Rights, which it must take care not to overstep. Yet it cannot entirely withdraw itself from the discussion of questions, such as those which now arise in the domain of Ecclesiology; because these are inseparably connected, not merely with the accurate conception, but also with the desired development and true life, of the Church, even as these are expressly spoken of in the Netherlands Confession (Artt. xxx.—xxxii.). Here, however, we are specially required to be succinct, where we treat the question of Church Government first from its negative and then from its positive side, in order finally to come to a decisive solution.

2. That Christ is Head and Shepherd of the Church in a thoroughly unique sense of the word, is put prominently forward in all Christian Confessions, and to express any doubt about it, is to contradict His own words.[2] The great question, however, is, does He or does He not govern His Church upon earth by a visible head? (Vicarius Dei aut Christi), and upon this point, it is well known, Romish and Protestant convictions are diametrically opposed. According to the first, the Lord has in Matt. xvi. 18, bestowed on Peter a primacy over all the Apostles, which thence has passed from him, as first bishop of Rome, to all his successors. As a consequence of this the Pope combines in himself the highest ecclesiastical and temporal dignity, his utterances have infallible authority in the domain of ecclesiastical doctrine and life, and it is even necessary to salvation (de necessitate salutis) to recognise him in this sense as the Church's spiritual head.

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[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

[2] Matt. xxiii. 8; xxviii. 18.

We need not deny that now and then this doctrine has been contested on the part of Protestants with less solid weapons. To these belongs certainly the forced exegesis which understands the great words respecting the Petra, only of the confession, and not of the person of Peter. We at least do not for an instant doubt that the last is unreservedly meant; and as we find in this expression a proof beyond suspicion of the deep significance attached by the Saviour Himself to the sacred personality in particular of Peter, for the foundation of the Kingdom of God, we do not hesitate to salute him who, both among Jews and Gentiles, first of all the Apostles, proclaimed the Gospel successfully, in an historical sense, as the Petra (rock) of the Church. But yet this gives no absolute right to the arbitrary concatenation of consequences, which has for centuries been deduced from it in favour of the Papacy. Even if we allow that Peter was actually at Rome (though the Scriptures of the New Testament do not absolutely declare it, and hardly leave room to suppose it), nothing is thereby determined in favour of his Episcopate over that Church. Still less can Rome demonstrate that what was indeed said to Peter himself, must be transferred without limitation to all his supposed successors, the subsequent bishops of Rome. Least of all can it be maintained, after an impartial investigation of history, that the so-called "cathedra Petri" of the first centuries was marked out for the primacy of the centre of Christendom, and was recognised as such. The study of patristic literature teaches the student a very different lesson, and from the *Apostolical Constitutions*, Origen, Tertullian, Cyprian, and others, not a little can be educed, by which the imaginary security of the sacred chair is undermined. Church history shows, moreover, its length of existence, and how many circumstances must have conspired to raise this bishop's see above all others in dignity and power. We do not treat of the temporal power of the Pope at all. The baselessness of its claims is evident, and it is unnecessary to spurn fallen greatness. But even when we do not leave the spiritual domain, it is more than sufficiently apparent how infinitely far a primacy, such as is here declared, is removed from the original spirit of Jesus, or even of Peter himself. Only reflect, how inexorably the Lord resists all struggles for pre-eminence in the circle of His first friends.[3] How soon he transfers the privilege here granted to Peter to all His Apostles,[4] and even at the hour of His departure causes the requirement of ministering love to be exhibited as true greatness in the kingdom of God;[5] add to this what the history of the Apostolic age testifies as to the personal relation between Peter and the other Apostles, specially that between Peter and Paul,[6] and what Peter declares concerning himself;[7] and lastly, call to mind what all know about the heresy, the revolting immorality, the mutual contradiction, of some of the Popes on the most important points, and, even without accepting the old Protestant nicknames, we shall have more than enough for our estimate of a monstrous system, which in our century, in mockery of history and of sound intellect, has found its blasphemous consummation in the well-known

[3] Matt. xviii. 1—4.
[4] Matt. xviii. 18; John xx. 23.
[5] Luke xxii. 24—27.
[6] Acts xi. 2; xv. 7—11; Gal. iv. 6, *sqq.*
[7] 1 Pet. v. 1—4.

dogma of Infallibility. Against such facts how can any of that *à priori* reasoning with which men have often attempted to make the absurd worthy of acceptance, avail? It is easy to say and reiterate, "A visible head is a necessary condition of a visible Church" (Möhler). On the other hand, again, it may be reiterated with at least equal right, that the Omniscient and Omnipresent King of the Church needs no visible representative on earth, and that, as is shown by the event, the desired unity of the Church is not in any way advanced, but rather most miserably destroyed, by the Papal system. No wonder then that this view, with whatever brilliancy of talent it may have been defended, has been constantly and with such energy contested, even by members of the Church of Rome itself. The Polemics, which has been opened afresh by the old Catholic party, was already more than a hundred years ago worthily maintained under the Pseudonym of Justinus Febronius by J. N. van Hontheim (Bishop of Treves, † 1791), in his treatise, "*De Statu Ecclesiæ*," and can never rest, unless the Church of Rome is *entirely* deserted by the Spirit of truth.

Compare LANGE, MEYER, and others in their Commentaries on Matt. xvi. 18.—The best guide to a knowledge of the Romish theory is to be found in the treatise of Cardinal BELLARMINE, *De Summo Pontifice*, as also in the (Roman Catholic) *Dogmatik* of KLEE, 4th edn. (1861), i., p. 201, *sqq.* Its untenability has often been shown, *inter alios*, in the monograph of J. ELLENDORF, *Das Primat der Römischen Päbste, aus den Quellen dargestellt.*, i., ii. (1841, 1846). Compare also his Essay, *Ist Petrus in Rom und Bischof der röm. Kirche gewesen?* (1842); also H. ROST, *De Leer der R. K. aangaande P. primaatschap over de App.* (1867). See also the interesting *Verslag van de openbare discussie over 's Apostels verblijf te Rome*, held at Rome in Feb., 1872. The Essay of K. HASE, *a. a. O.*, p. 141, *sqq.*, continues to be a model of Protestant polemics on this subject. Upon the dissertation of JUSTINUS FEBRONIUS, compare D. G. G. MÜLLER MASSIS, *De Joh. Nic. Honthemio, Strenuo lib. Eccl. Vindice* (1863). On the last Council and its results, read the interesting treatises of F. BUNGENER, E. DE PRESSENSÉ, S. H. TEN CATE, and others. Special mention should be made of the works of the Roman Catholic Professor at Rome, J. LANGEN, *Das Vaticanische Dogma von dem Universalepiscopat una die Unfehlbarkeit des Pabstes. Eine Bitte um Aufklärung an allen Kathol. Theologen* (1871). Upon the disputed point, whether the Pope alone, or only in union with a General Council, is to be considered head of the Church, dogmatics has less to say than the science of Canon law.

3. What has been said, however, does not take away from the necessity of a Church government, which must be in unison with the word and spirit of the Lord and His Apostles. Order is indispensable where the moral aim of the kingdom of God is to be gained,[8] but order cannot be maintained without proper guidance. Thus the Lord of the Church has actually called not merely distinct persons to the ministry of the Gospel, but has ordained certain fixed offices and dignities, which, when occupied by fitting persons, must form one organic whole.[9] Not merely the institution of the Apostolate, but also that of the office of Pastor and Teacher, must be regarded as established by Christ Himself. The Lord ordained Apostles; the Apostles, where they founded churches, a certain number of Elders, or overseers, to whom was entrusted the orderly administration of affairs. The Presbyte-

[8] 1 Cor. xiv. 33, 40.

[9] Ephes. iv. 11, 12; 1 Cor. xii. 4—11.

rial, or (if men prefer it) the Episcopal system (both names mean originally one and the same thing—see, *e.g.*, Acts xx. 17, 28), may thus be called the basis and model of all true Christian Church government. Among the earliest overseers of the Church must they who laboured in the word and doctrine be counted worthy of double honour,[10] and it was in the nature of the case that such brethren would soon be placed at the head of the assembly of the elders, who were called with them to watch over the spiritual interests of the Church. If besides these we see Deacons soon appointed,[11] in order to provide regularly for the temporal needs of the poor, it was in consequence of a want which the other overseers could not fittingly supply; but we must not therefore understand that these administrators for the poor were in exactly the same position as the Apostles or other overseers. A Church which did not contain any needy members would be already sufficiently governed by its Leaders and Overseers; and the later connection of the office of preaching with the diaconate, such as is still sometimes met with, is therefore in principle inadmissible. But, however this may be, with the pastor and teachers, the overseers and deacons now form the joint council of the Church, to which is expressly entrusted the care of its highest interests. All the overseers of the Church have in common equal privileges and equal obligations, without any essential pre-eminence being ascribed to him who occupies a higher place above him of less degree.[12] None of them may exercise dominion over faith and practice; all ought to be fellow-workers in the joy of all.[13] The ethico-spiritual authority exercised by them, as in the name of the Lord, is committed to them by the Church itself, in so far as this is guided by the word and spirit of the Lord. For Revolutionary democracy is as little in the spirit of the Gospel and the Reformation as a haughty oligarchy, in which the inheritance of the Lord is treated "not as a flock, but as a horde" (Lange). Where, however, the Church has attained to due maturity, the right to choose her teachers and overseers rests with herself, and that right may not be disputed or curtailed without injury to her inviolable freedom. Only where she herself chooses to exercise this her right by means of third persons, are these last in a position to act, always on the basis of the principle of community of faith between them and the Church which they must lawfully represent. Even Synodical authority rests on the presupposed existence of the unity of faith between the Church and her pastors and teachers. It is (in principle) the combination of the presbyterial system into a powerful aristocratic government; which then first becomes intolerable when those who are thus called to serve the Church will rule over her with assumed authority, and make churchly ordinances superior to obedience to the word of God.

4. The superiority of this Presbyterial system not only to that of the Papal Hierarchy, but to the Episcopal system of the Anglican and Lutheran Church, is apparent from every new comparison, and has even been acknowledged by distinguished Lutheran Theologians, *e.g.*, by J. V. Andreæ and Ph. J. Spener. On the one side the universal priesthood of believers continues unrestricted; on the other the Apostolic principle, "every

[10] 1 Tim. v. 17.
[11] Acts vi. 1—5.
[12] Matt. xx. 25—28.
[13] 2 Cor. i. 24.

one in his own order," obtains its perfectly legitimate right. The principles of Church government, as they were fixed and applied by the Swiss Reformers in accordance with Scripture, need only to be conceived and developed in all their purity to be an inestimable blessing to the Church of the future. Infinitely greater good may at least be looked for from these, than from the modified Sacerdotalism on one side, and the absolute Anticlericalism on the other, to which we see some inclining in our day. Even where the first shows itself in more covert forms, as, *e.g.*, in the Irvingites, we can only discover in it a fruitless reconstruction of earlier conditions, a coquetting with the Church of Rome. But even the other, though in our estimation less dangerous, and manifested in forms worthy of respect (Quakers, Darbyites, Plymouth Brethren, etc.), can hardly escape the reproach of great one-sidedness and arbitrary ignoring of the mind of the Spirit. With the diversity of the gifts of the Spirit is *ipso facto* combined that of teaching and serving in the Church of the Lord; and the history of the Kingdom of God has, next to the right and obligation of brotherly admonition, raised beyond all reasonable doubt the necessity and value of the office of the word, which must naturally be properly distinguished from the priesthood of the Romish Church. If Clericalism, specially in the Evangelical Reformed domain, is censurable, even the "as brethren among brethren" has often been understood and applied in a manner which cannot conduce to elevate "the ministry of the Gospel" ordained by the Lord of the Church Himself. But this is not the place for a closer examination of these questions. Only let it, in conclusion, be granted that Church government, too, if it will really fulfil its high destiny, must be continually purified, in accordance with the words of the Apostle, from everything which in any way prevents it from being the faithful servant of the Church, according to the declared will of the Lord and the definite requirements of the present time. "As the representatives of the mother-Church, the Apostles not only express the churchly consciousness of an earlier time, but are the representation of the Christian Church for all time" (Martensen).

Compare VOETIUS, *Polit. Eccles.*, i., ii.; G. V. LECHLER, *Geschichte der Presbyteri und Syn. Verf.* (1854); FR. BRANDES, *Die Verfassung der Kirche nach evangel. Grundsätzen* (1867), besides, with respect to many particulars here only touched upon, the principal Handbooks of Canon Law and Practical Theology.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Reasons for the copious discussion of the dogma of Church government in the Netherlands Confession.—How is it that the Lord has not given more express directions as to the government and guidance of the Church?—What conclusion as to the original Church government can be drawn with approximate certainty from the Acts and Epistles of the Apostles?—Significance and force of the laying on of hands, according to the Apostolic writings.—How to explain the origin and increased power of the Romish Hierarchy.—The sharp contrast between *clergy* and *laity* tested by the Gospel.—Comparison of the Lutheran, Anglican, and Reformed Church-form.—The doctrine and practice of the Greek Church in this matter.—The ministry of the Gospel in its origin and constant significance for the guidance and perfecting of the Church.—Is there ground for expecting or desiring the restoration of some of the offices of the ancient Christian Church in our own day, or in the future?—What is still required for the realisation of the ideal of the union of freedom and order in this domain?

SECTION CXXXIV.—THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

As the Church is in the world, without being of the world, so is it called to operate on the world, without allowing the world to rule over it. The relation between Church and State, which is most conducive to this end, is hence to be preferred to all others. From the Christian Reformed standpoint, the idea of a churchly state can be no more welcomed than that of a privileged State-Church; but the Church ought to be regarded and recognised as an independent moral body in the State. Her sacred duty is founded on this her right, just as her well-assured future depends on her fidelity to this duty.

1. After what has been said, the only question still left is, What relation must the Church, thus founded and governed, assume to the surrounding world, especially to the State and its power? A question as little of a purely dogmatic nature as the last, but which equally with it claims to be briefly treated in Ecclesiology, just as it is propounded at sufficient length in Art. xxxvi. of the Netherlands Confession. It is needless to say that it is impossible for us to sketch even in broad outline the history of the different relations between Church and State. We can only point out great principles, whose complete elucidation, defence, and application belongs not to our subject, but to a distinct one.

2. We lay down this at once as our *fundamental principle*, that the Church, as the proper creation of the Holy Ghost, can stand to the world around her in no other relation than that in which the Lord Himself placed Himself personally to the world, and has undoubtedly desired that His disciples also should afterwards occupy to it. In order to elucidate this, we at once call to mind all those words of the Saviour, in which He insisted that His people were to be a blessing to the world, without on that account losing sight for a moment of their actual distinction from the world;[1] and, specially, His positive declaration that His kingdom is not of this world.[2] We see Him without gainsaying fulfil every civil obligation,[3] but at the same time refuse to intermeddle with a domain foreign to Him,[4] and carefully distinguish between the limits of civil and religious obligation.[5] His Apostles, too, enunciate similar principles,[6] and we see these, when the opportunity is afforded, brought into practice by them.[7] No wonder; the Church has another origin, and another destiny, than the kingdoms of

[1] Matt. v. 13—16; John xvii. 15, 16.
[2] John xviii. 36.
[3] Matt. xvii. 27.
[4] Luke xii. 13, 14.
[5] Luke xx. 25.
[6] Rom. xiii. 1—7; 1 Pet. ii. 17.
[7] Acts xxiv. 10; xxv. 8.

this world; but, at the same time, as a visible revelation of the inner unity of believers, she has a most important task to accomplish in the world. She must testify of Christ, and ceaselessly strive, by means of the life which flows out from her, to conquer the world for the Lord. Hence it follows legitimately, that that relation between Church and State will be most normal and desirable, which gives the former the most favourable opportunity for acquitting herself of this her calling. Let us see from which of the different relations, which may here be presented, we may expect the most benefit for the object in view.

3. Is it desirable that the Church should rule the State? in other words, is an *Ecclesiastical State* the highest ideal of the future? It is known how strenuously and with what result the Hierarchy of the Middle Ages proposed to itself this object. The two swords of the Paschal Chamber[8] were placed in the hands of the pretended successor of Peter; the Church was called the greater light, the State the lesser light, of heaven, of which the record of creation speaks.[9] It is universally known that even in later time—yea, in our own day—these aspirations of the Vatican are by no means forgotten; but, at the same time, it hardly needs to be demonstrated that the statement of these aspirations already brings with it their absolute condemnation. The irreconcilable conflict of this theory with the declared principles of Christ Himself is self-evident, and history teaches that the separation between Church and Religion was never greater than at that very time when the first appeared as ruler of the world. This she cannot possibly be, without renouncing her spiritual character, and in the end secularising herself entirely. If need be, it is much better for the Church to be oppressed, and even persecuted, than to receive for her cross a crown, which must inevitably destroy the principle of life in her heart.

4. No churchly state thus, but still less a *State Church*, is the ideal, which for centuries has been pursued by so many, but with so little fruit to the Church. The attempt of the State to become the protector of the Church dates from the time of Constantine the Great, who considered himself, as distinguished from the purely spiritual guardians of the Church, an "Episcopus extra Ecclesiam." No wonder that, specially after the Reformation, such powerful aid was gladly seized by so many who saw their liberty of conscience threatened by the Church of Rome and its abettors. In the pious kings of Israel and Judah men thought they saw the best model for Christian princes, and that they might expect from their influence the fulfilment of the word of prophecy (Isa. xlix. 23). In the dedication to the King of France of Calvin's *Institutio;* in the petition sent with the *Netherlands Confession* to the Diet of 1566; in Article xxxvi. of that Confession, and in a number of other places, we see this view more or less clearly favoured; and the powerful support actually afforded by the magistracy at Geneva to the work of the Reformation, is generally known. In the Lutheran Church, at its origin, the independence of the Church from the State was still maintained, at least by Luther himself. The Reformer, in particular, thought the State was not called on to exercise its power against heretics. "Heresy is a spiritual thing which axe cannot cut,

[8] Luke xxii. 38. [9] Gen. i. 16.

fire cannot burn, and water cannot drown." During the time of the Civil War, and subsequently, however, his views upon this point seem to have completely changed; after 1527, at least, we see Church government as such formally placed in the hands of the sovereign. To justify this state of affairs, (1) the *Episcopal* system was elaborated, specially supported by Carpsovius (1645), in which was maintained the proposition that the power of the former bishops had now passed over into the hands of the sovereigns, who thus might "jure proprio" govern the Church of the country. Another legal ground was afterwards sought (2) in the *Territorial* system, favoured towards the close of the seventeenth century by Thomas and Böhmer, in accordance with the rule "cujus regio, illius religio," a Cæsareopapism, which was warmly contested by Spener. It was attempted to soften any part of this system which was suspected by the Church, by (3) the *Collegial* system, devised by Pfaff and others at the beginning of the eighteenth century; according to it the Church, as a free society, had authority to transfer its government to the authority of the State, but at the same time might require that on the part of the State nothing should be ordained that conflicted with the object for which the Church exists. We cannot here describe even inadequately the endless confusion introduced into many churches by this intermingling of the civil and churchly authority. Enough that in Russia and England we see the National Church entirely under the recognised supremacy of the State, and even in the Netherlands the Reformed Church was compelled in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to pay for the honour of being superior to, and dominant over, all others, by the loss of its self-reliance and independence. The Church owed to the State the translation of the Bible (1637), the improved metrical version of the Psalms (1773), with other good gifts, but also — the State commissioner in her Synod. It may be freely granted that this whole system was in principle less un-Christian than the first-named; but equally, that it found much more support in the spirit of the Old, than in that of the New Testament, and not less, that the withdrawal of this condition, subsequent to, and in consequence of 1795, has at any rate been for the Netherlands Church much more a blessing than a disaster. According to the Christian Reformed principle, indeed, all power in the Church depends upon service in the Church; and thus this can never be granted to statesmen solely on account of their character as such. The State has not the slightest right to exercise authority over the inheritance of the Lord, and it generally exacts the highest price for the services which by its power it renders to the Church. Throughout all ages the Church has been healthier and stronger, where it was oppressed by the State, than where it was supported and protected by it. Hence the "timeo Danaos et dona ferentes" has here a very wide application; and the Church which has not learnt in good time to do without the support of a fleshly arm, may prepare itself for a painful disappointment during the increasing strife between the power of the world and the kingdom of God."[10]

5. Where the Church is viewed and recognised as an independent moral body, there first is produced a purer condition and a better future. This

[10] Jer. xvii. 5, 6.

principle, thoroughly in harmony with the word and spirit of the New Testament, is indicated among others by Calvin, where in his *Institutio*, iv. 20, 1, he declared without disguise, "Spirituale Christi regnum et civilem ordinationem res esse plurimum oppositas." It requires *separation of Church and State*, not in the revolutionary, but in the Christian, sense of the word; autarchy of the Church in its own domain; in a word, the free Church in the free State, such as in the second half of this century has been demanded with increasing emphasis, is promoted, and in part established. From the Christian Reformed standpoint it must be regarded as evidence of progress, that this principle is accepted in the newer political law. Liberation of the Church from the obstructive authority of the State must thus be required in principle; but in practice the way for it can only be made, and it be prepared and established with the greatest caution. "State and Church are not set by us in revolutionary and ungodly opposition the one to the other, but are placed ethically side by side" (Van Toorenenbergen). The Church must be free *in* the State, in no way without or in opposition to it, as at the time of the Reformation the Anabaptists wished to be, and the Baptists afterwards, though in a more moderate form; but free, as the leaven is independent in the meal, which it must permeate in every direction. In many respects we may say, that the ideal has been attained in the Free Churches of Scotland, and in North America, and we congratulate ourselves, that the Netherlands Reformed Church also, at any rate since 1852, has made an important step towards the same end.

6. We consider thus, that the union of Church and State in any indvidual form is not to be desired; but it is evident, that a *proper* relation between the two is of the utmost importance even for the Church. The Church can never abandon the principle of Church government, and hence may concede to the State the *jus circa sacra*, but never *in sacra*. But conversely the Church must occupy towards the State, not the relation of a princely rival, but rather that of the servant of the Lord, who desires to serve with her spiritual gifts all whom she can, and is permitted to help. Both Church and State, in relation to one another, have reciprocal rights, but at the same time reciprocal duties. The State is under obligation to respect the freedom of the Church within her own sphere, and to leave to her without hindrance the rights of faith and confession, of public religious worship and churchly discipline, of self-government and management, of self-reformation and extension, with all its consequences; but at the same time the State is justified in seeing that its own free activity is not hindered by unsuitable interference on the part of ecclesiastics. The Church, on the other hand, is justified in rejecting unconditionally, every interference of the State with her own interests, and also obliged to respect and obey the Government in all things which do not conflict with a higher law.[11] In particular cases the relation between Church and State ought to be indicated everywhere where they meet, in accordance with the principles of both, in such a manner as is often done by the Romish Church by means of Concordats; though the traditional antipathy of Protestants to these is perfectly conceivable. Besides, the relation between Church and State will naturally either be more

[11] Acts v. 29.

easy or more tense in proportion as both of the two parties maintain or lose sight of the old lesson, "Let every one recognise his rights, but let every one also recognise his duties."

7. When we look at the centuries of struggle between Church and State, and think of the great final issue, expected by faith in the future, it is not unnatural to ask, what is the *end* towards which on this domain the Church must strive with all its power, the prospect which it may picture for itself with sufficient grounds? Philosophers in our century, Hegel, for example, and Rothe, have found in the humanistic state the ideal of humanity. According to their view, the Church will thus be resolved into the State; her worship, into the highest developments of art; her communion, into the ennobled life of her people: in other words, the hour of the triumph of the Church will also be that of her disappearing. "An universal Christian State organisation will gradually spring up. When in it the (Christian) moral Communion, determined at the same time as absolutely (Christian) religious, is realised in its absolute extent, there will then be left beside it no room for the Church. But, until this point of perfection is attained, the Church remains an absolute necessity, *but in a constantly* decreasing degree" (Rothe). If this view were the true one, then we ought to regard the efforts of the Modern spirit to bring the Church again really, so far as possible, *under* the influence of the State, as a real sign of progress. But in this Utopia we see nought else but the fruit of an idealistic illusion of a noble soul, which takes account more of its own aspirations than of the signs of the times, and the notes of the word of prophecy. Far from finding reasons for expecting a continued approximation between the power of the world and the Church of the Lord, we must count on the opposite. Besides, we consider it absolutely impossible that the ethico-religious ideal, even in the best organised and most highly developed State, should be so attained, that this could in the end say to the Church with absolute right, *I have no need of thee.* The highest needs of man and the sinner will in vain seek for satisfaction, even from the most perfect State on earth. It is therefore the Church's duty, by means of a lawful emancipation and continued reformation, to strive after the most complete development of vigorous life, in consequence of which she does not give up or repel modern society, but penetrates all its ramifications. If this duty be fulfilled, there is no doubt that the Church, not the State, will be the longest-lived of the two; or better, *the centuries of contact and conflict will be resolved in the higher unity of the perfected Kingdom of God.* As the Church of God on the smallest scale was already in existence before the oldest State was established, so will she in her complete development triumph over all the opposition of the worldly power, and never rest until are fulfilled those grand words, "Now is come the salvation, and the strength, and the *kingdom* of our God, and the *power* of His Christ."[12] If *that* hope could mislead us, and the power of the world, and not the perfected kingdom of God must be the last words of the entire history, then must we take up the words of the pious thinker of the Middle Ages, Richard de Saint Victor, "Domine, si error est, a Te ipso decepti sumus."

[12] Rev. xii. 10.

Compare CALVIN, *Institutio*, iv. 20; W. BROES, *Kerk en Staat in wederz. betrekking* (1830); VEGELIN VAN CLAERBERGEN, *De juribus Summi Imperantis in Societ. Ecclesiast.* (1833); A. VINET, *Essai sur la manifestation des convictions religieuses et sur la séparation de l'Eglise et de l'Etat* (1842); J. P. LANGE, *Ueber die Neugestaltung des Verhältnisses zwischen Kirche und Staat* (1848); A. HAEUBER, *Verhältn. von Staat und Kirche* in Herzog, *R. E.*, vii.; D. CHANTEPIE DE LA SAUSSAYE, *Leven en Richting* (1865), Third Lecture; and also his later work, *Het Protestantisme als politiek beginsel* (1871).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Why did not the Lord give any definite regulations respecting the relation of His Church to the State and to society?—Explanation of Rom. xiii. 1—7, 1 Pet. ii. 16, and similar passages.—In what respects do Church and State coincide? and in what do they differ?—Can the 36th article of the Netherlands Confession be perfectly justified in regard to the claim which it there makes on the Government?—Contrast between the principles of the Reformers and the Anabaptists.—What meaning must we give to the "Jus *circa* et *in* sacra"?—What do we learn from later history concerning the possibility and desirability of separation of Church and State? and what as to the right relation of the two?—Are there absolutely no cases in which religious liberty may and must be limited by the State?—What can ministers of the Gospel do to advance the right relation of Christianity and the Church to the State and society?—Is there absolutely no reason to fear that the Church will in the end be absorbed in the omnipotence of the State?—The State of God, or the Kingdom of God at the last.

SECOND DIVISION.

THE MEANS OF GRACE.

SECTION CXXXV.—PRAYER IN THE NAME OF JESUS.

THE work of grace is accomplished in the sinner, not without, but by the use of definite means of grace, by which the Holy Ghost brings about and confirms the inner life of faith. Personal and common prayer in the name of Jesus is not so much one of these means, as the great condition, to which is attached the blessing upon the use of them all. By putting the demand for this prayer in the very foreground, the Gospel combats alike an arrogant self-confidence and a lethargic passivity.

1. With the doctrine of the Church is most closely connected that of the means of grace (*adminicula, vehicula gratiæ*). In these words we do not allude now to everything in general, even in the domain of natural life, through which any good in man is nourished and confirmed, but more specially to those means which, according to the witness of the Gospel, the Holy Ghost employs to lead the sinner in the way of faith and conversion. So we are engaged here in the domain of grace in the more limited sense of the word, in which we have already learned to distinguish it from the mere natural sphere (§ cxxii. 6), and we recall the remark then made, that the operations of the Holy Ghost (*operationes gratiæ*) usually take effect only by some means. Now we ask, what are those means, existing in the bosom of the Christian Church, to be as it were the channels of that new life, which flows through her living members?

2. The *name*, Means of Grace, is one of those, which, though not literally derived from Holy Scripture, has for a long time been current in the theological world. Generally it denotes everything which God in Christ has given,[1] and still always continues to give in behalf of life and godliness. Thus the whole doctrine of grace is here taken for granted, and the question is, In what way does the Holy Ghost attain the proposed aim? Though that Spirit in fact is not tied to any means, in the sense that He could not possibly work in an entirely different manner, and therefore we cannot speak of any *absolute* necessity for these means, yet Scripture and Experience teach, that He usually employs the means which are now to be more closely discussed, and the use of them is for this reason expressly

[1] 2 Pet. i. 3.

prescribed by God. (Necessitas *præcepti*, non absoluta.) "Deus interna non dat, nisi per externa" (Luther). It is these means which must now be more closely considered, each by itself, and in their mutual connection.

3. The *extent* of the domain of the means of grace has not been and is not defined by all in the same manner. The orthodox Lutherans usually declare them to be the Word of God and the Sacraments, to which the Smalkald Articles have also added the power of the keys, as also the mutual conversation and consolation of the brethren, evidently a kind of substitute for confession and absolution. The Romish Church, at least in practice, places the Sacraments even above the Word; the Lutheran co-ordinates one with the other; the Reformed in its doctrine and practice gives the highest place to the preached Word of God, though it, second to this, holds the Sacraments in honour (*Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 65; *Neth. Conf.*, Artt. xxiv. and xxxiii.), and attaches no little value to the "keys of the kingdom of heaven" for the benefit of the Church of Christ. If we accept this last idea, in the more general conception of "Christian Church-life," as an effective means for the perfecting of the saints, we shall really suffer no loss, but shall in some respects gain. Consequently our eyes settle here on the Word, on the Sacraments in general and individually, and on the Christian Church-life, all regarded as means of grace; and for that reason not treated so as to lead us to vague digressions on one or another; but to answer by the light of the Gospel and experience, in the unadulterated spirit of the Reformation, the question, What relation do these means hold to the conversion of the sinner, and the strengthening of believers?

4. The *importance* of the investigation here begun, does not need any wide demonstration; the subject sufficiently recommends itself. At the time of the Reformation special value was attached to this portion of the doctrine of salvation, because it furnished a powerful weapon, by which to oppose the fanatics, who wished to justify the greatest follies and crimes by an appeal to the inner light of the Spirit, while they rejected Scripture and Symbol. On this point no one was more inexorable than Luther, to whom these "Enthusiasts" seemed not less dangerous than all the powers of Rome. But even independently of this the doctrine remains important to every one who is seeking his own salvation; specially so for the preacher of the Gospel; above all in our day, in which, just as grace itself, so also are the means of grace from different sides alternately over-valued and ignored, misconstrued and misused. It is thus absolutely necessary, both in theory and practice, to aim at the exact presentation, without turning aside to the right or to the left.

5. No Christian thinker will deny, that in this connection the doctrine of *prayer* is of the highest importance. Prayer indeed is, according to Scripture and Experience the great condition, to which God Himself has attached the enjoyment of all blessings, and specially blessings of a spiritual nature.[2] Hence it is but natural that it should be constantly proclaimed with eagerness in the Confessional writings of the Reformed Church as a means of salvation (*Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxvi.; *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 116), as specially since the time of, and following in the track of, Schleiermacher,[3] it is also

[2] Matt. vii. 7—11.

[3] *Ghr. Gl.* ii., §§ 146, 147.

more expressly treated in Dogmatics. It is less necessary to discuss here generally the nature and essence of prayer, as a principal element of Religion, since here exclusively *Christian* prayer, treated in a merely introductory way, claims our attention. Here, we repeat, without therefore being able to join those who merely *co-ordinate* prayer with other means of grace. We have only to examine these means to feel at once that Christian prayer is something different from all these other means, and at the same time something infinitely higher; not a means among several, but the "conditio sine quâ non" to the successful use of all. That we do not speak too strongly will be evident when we duly understand and value the promise made to His friends by the Lord Himself, to prayer in His name, in three different places in His farewell discourse in St. John's Gospel,[4]

6. The accurate *conception* of such prayer cannot be so easily defined as might seem possible upon a superficial glance; and we have but to compare the different expositors, to be struck with the variety and indefiniteness of the many explanations of this demand. Thus much at once appears, such praying is meant as up to that time had been unknown to the pious disciples of the Lord, and which they would first learn in a higher grade of spiritual life, when, after the exaltation of Jesus, the Holy Ghost should have descended on them. In that praying, according to the force of the expression, must the name of Jesus, object of their faith and confession, be regarded as the sphere, the *centre*, the element of life, in which he who prays lives. This profound expression is partly elucidated by comparing John xv. 7 with 1 John v. 16. It appears to denote a confident appeal to the One True God, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the closest communion with Him, and thus too in such a spirit, and with such an object, as might reasonably be expected from His true disciple, as distinguished from every other person, who prays.

7. The supreme *object* of true Christian prayer is the Father, to whom we come through the Son. The sense, too, in which reverential worship may be offered to the Son, and what view we must take of prayer to the Holy Ghost, has been already discussed. Yet it is certainly according to the will of the Lord, when we do not rest content with praying to Himself, but like children call upon the Only True God by the name of Father. Since no one may be the object of worship but God, this precept in principle does away with the pretext for any idolatry of the creature.[5] The Romish distinction between worship, (λατρεία), which is offered to God only, and reverence (δουλεία), which may also be offered to Angels and Saints, is exegetically arbitrary, and is constantly forgotten in practice. No invocation of creatures avails, so long as it is not evident that they are omnipresent and omnipotent; as Calvin says, "Quis eousque longas illis esse aures revelavit, quæ ad voces nostras porrigantur?" If the Lord looked forward to a time when His own intercession would no longer be needed by His people,[6] still less may the invocation of any creature by them be counted well pleasing to Him. Not to the brother, but to the Father Himself; not in their own name, nor in the name of any creature,

[4] John xiv. 13, 14; xv. 16; xvi. 23—26. [5] Compare Matt. iv. 10; Rev. xxii. 8, 9.
[6] John xvi. 26, 27.

but in His name, must His disciples speak to the Father. By this they declare in other words that they dare not come in their own name, but base their confidence solely on their personal relation to the Son, through whom they are pleasing to the Father. But at the same time the subject-matter of their prayer is defined by their calling upon that Name; because, from the very fact that it is made in this Name, everything is put away which testifies of a sinful, selfish desire, which God could not satisfy. For these reasons, then, it is certainly not accidental that prayer in the name of Jesus, though personally demanded from every one of His disciples, is yet generally intended and actually offered as a prayer in common with others.[7]

8. The *force* of this prayer is already declared in part by what has been said. Where prayer is really made in the name of Jesus, there it is the Holy Ghost who prays *in* the believer;[8] Christ Himself lives and speaks in the heart, which lifts itself in prayer to the Father; how can the Divine response be wanting to the voice of such a supplication? "In the same degree in which prayer is truly made in His Name is it also heard; for in the same degree it is He Himself who prays through us" (Martensen). We have therefore undoubtedly to maintain, that to this prayer must be ascribed not merely a psychological, but also a metaphysical operation; in other words, that by praying we not merely strengthen ourselves for that which is good, but that God Himself, according to His promises, grants to us, in and through prayer, good gifts, specially those of the Holy Ghost. As to the connection between asking and receiving, compare what has been already said in §§ lxi. 7, 8, and lxiii. 3, 4. Whatever mysteries may still remain in this domain, facts speak too strongly to admit of any doubt, from the Christian-theistic standpoint, of the effect of prayer in the name of Jesus.

9. Finally, the *requisites* of such prayer can hardly be better seen than when we look at that prayer which the Lord Himself taught His disciples.[9] "The greatest martyr," as Luther said, but also the most perfect model. He who prays this prayer with an eye to, and in the spirit of, the Saviour, may truly be said to have prayed in His name. The *subject-matter* of real Christian prayer, measured by this rule, embraces everything which relates either to the honour of God, or to man's own temporal and spiritual needs, but the latter more than the former. The *spirit* which must characterise it, is that of deep reverence, childlike confidence, and holy brotherliness. We cannot possibly look for too much benefit for the growth of the inner life from constant prayer in such a spirit. "Oratio justi est clavis cœli; ascendit precatio, et descendit Dei misericordia" (Augustine).

10. The *importance* of the requirement of prayer at the threshold of this portion of our investigation, after all that has been said, is self-evident. By it the two great hindrances to all true spiritual life are at once combated in principle,—I mean arrogant self-confidence, and lethargic passivity. Thus we place it in the forefront; on this domain, above all, expect nothing without God, but also nothing from God, unless by constant use of the

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[7] Compare Matt. xviii. 19, 20; Acts i. 14; xii. 5.
[8] Rom. viii. 26, 27.
[9] Matt. vi. 9—13; Luke xi. 1—4.

means ordained by Him. In opposition to practical Pelagianism, along with the "labora" the "ora" must be unceasingly emphasised; in opposition to the fatal Quietism, on the other hand, the inseparable union between grace and means of grace must be constantly asserted and demonstrated. Only thus is the individual not only first guided into the way of life, but the whole Church led forward towards a better future.

Compare LANGE'S article, *Gnadenmittel*, in Herzog, *R. E.*, v., p. 200, *sqq.*; K. SUEDHOF, *Comm. de convenientiâ, quæ inter utrumque Gratiæ instrumentum, Verbum Dei, et Sacramentum, intercedit* (1852). Upon Prayer in the name of Jesus, an article of EBRARD, in Herzog, *R. E.*, iv.; a paper of W. F. GESS, at the Conference of Pastors at Barmen in 1861. Compare also J. MARTIN, *Conférences sur la Prière* (1849).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Cause of the very varying estimate of the doctrine of the means of grace.—Difference in the treatment of this doctrine from the Protestant and Roman Catholic standpoint.—Estimate of the means of grace in the smaller communities and sects.—Is the doctrine of prayer, treated in the Heidelberg Catechism, Ans. 116, *sqq.*, in the proper place, and from the proper point of view?—Elucidation of the most important passages of Scripture which relate to Christian prayer.—The doctrine of intercession for others.—Closer criticism of the worship of angels and saints in the Romish Church.—Discussion of the chief exegetical and critical questions touching the Lord's Prayer.—The morbid phenomena in the spiritual and churchly domain with respect to the estimation and use of the means of grace.

SECTION CXXXVI.—THE WORD OF PREACHING.

The preaching of the Word of God (the Law and the Gospel), is the chief means, ordained by Christ Himself, and sufficient for all, by which the Holy Ghost brings about the commencement and continuance of saving faith in the heart of the sinner. The connection between the operation of that Word and that Spirit is, from the nature of the case, mysterious, but nevertheless undoubtedly certain, and even—where the preaching is rightly directed and received—to a certain extent capable of explanation. Hence undervaluing of the Word of God as a means of grace is as reprehensible as the supposition that it in itself is sufficient without the power of the Holy Ghost.

1. Not for the first time are we called to speak of the Word of God in our treatment of the Christian doctrine of salvation. Already has Bibliology, in succession to Apocalyptics, furnished us with our subject in § xxxv., and the relation of the conceptions of Scripture and the Word of God has

been discussed as far as was necessary. But while that Word was then regarded definitely as a source of the truth of salvation, we have to consider it now only as a means of grace, and the remarks made with regard to the first subject, need not be repeated here. We have now to learn the *nature*, to establish the *operation*, to explain the *force*, and properly to estimate the *value*, of that means.

2. When we speak of the Word of God, we need scarcely call to mind that we do not mean the Bible itself, as if, without any use of it, any mysterious power was present in those sacred leaves and letters. We use the expression in the sense in which the Bible itself uses it, to denote the Divine revelation of salvation, of which the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the trustworthy records. To us everything is the Word of God, which God by the mouth of His messengers has made known respecting Himself and His will in the Holy Scriptures, and whose sum may be comprised in two words, the *Law* and the *Gospel*. By the word Law we do not by any means exclusively denote the Ten Commandments, in that form definitely fitted and intended for the people of Israel, but the moral precepts of revelation in general, declared and established by Jesus Himself,[1] by which the conscience of the sinner is aroused, and the life of the Christian, with due regard to the principle of Christian freedom, is to be governed and regulated. By *Gospel* we understand not merely a single book of the Bible, but all in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which points to the Christ of God and His salvation, and thus comforts the heart of the sinner, where the conscience is aroused. In the two we find, for reasons earlier produced, the proper Word of God,—in other words, the trustworthy indication on His part of what He requires and promises. Thus we mean the *external* word, as it not unfrequently is called, in contradistinction from the inner voice of heart and conscience, and indeed that word, as it is not only written, translated, distributed, and read, but as it is *preached*, and becomes in the world a living word which must lead sinners to life. That this word is really the great means used by the Holy Ghost to bring about and to confirm faith, is a conviction which in all the confessions and declarations of the Reformation is expressed without any hesitation and by preference. "The fundamental proposition, that the converting, enlightening, sanctifying activity of the Holy Ghost is indissolubly connected with the operation of the Divine word, is a precious jewel of the Evangelical Church" (J. Müller). The question is, Was the Evangelical Church right in so deciding? and to this question it is not difficult to establish an affirmative reply.

3. We see at once that the grace of God cannot be imparted to rational and moral beings, so long as God's holy and gracious will is not made known to them. "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" was the question aptly put by the Apostle of "reasonable" religion.[2] With reason might we hesitate to accept the statement that at once children of darkness, without the testimony and preaching of salvation in any form, had been brought into the kingdom of light; since "faith cometh by hearing, and

[1] Matt. xxii. 37—40. [2] Rom. x. 14—19.

hearing by the Word of God."—So the history of the kingdom of God has established by a number of instances that the operation of the Holy Ghost for conversion and sanctification is inseparably united to the preaching of the word of Truth. Think, *e.g.*, of the Day of Pentecost for the Jewish and heathen world;[3] of the many remarkable examples of the combined operation of the Word and Spirit in the Apostolic age;[4] of the many striking facts, in the history of preaching, reformation, and missions, which testify without the slightest room for doubt to the all-conquering, re-creating power of the Word. The world itself could not contain the books which should be written, if everything were to be properly narrated, from which it was apparent that this Word, and everything proceeding from it, had become a power, both in the great world without and in the little world within, such as none other on earth has been. No wonder that Paul rejoiced because "every way, whether in pretence or truth, Christ was preached,"[5] since then he felt sure of victory; and that Luther rejected all worldly weapons in defence of his cause, and was already grateful, if only the demand "let the Word alone," was complied with. From the Reformed standpoint in particular, this means of grace is rightly placed above every other; even as Luther declared, men might indeed be saved without a Sacrament, but not without a Testament. Nor are there wanting even from the partisans of Rome warm eulogies of the Word as the "cibus animæ" (see, *e.g.*, *Cat. Rom.* iv. 13, 12), but from the nature of the case these lose not a little of their value in consequence of a number of practices which conflict therewith. It is otherwise on our side, where not the sacramental action, but the solemn proclamation of God's counsel for the salvation of sinners, occupies the first place in public worship. But still it is ever anew evident that this word does not return void to Him who sent it,[6] and even for the time to come we can look for the triumph of Christianity, which is *par excellence* the religion of the word, only from the successful progress of free preaching. By the Word God made the world; by the Word He re-creates the world. After this is it necessary to establish, by an appeal to the very words of Scripture, that we are not at all partial when we thus exalt the Word of God as a means of grace? Consider what is written in praise of God's testimony under the Old Covenant,[7] and how the Lord Himself spoke of the sufficiency of the testimony of Moses and the Prophets, for all those who look for more extraordinary calls;[8] hear the testimony of Paul[9] as to the power of God unto salvation; of Peter[10] as to the seed of regeneration; of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews[11] as to the sharp and two-edged sword of the Word; then compare all this, and much more of a like kind, with what experience tells us in varied forms of ourselves and others, and we shall no longer hesitate with the Apostle to call the Word of God, as nothing else on earth, "the Sword of the Spirit."[12]

4. Thus much is already evident, but we must now treat of it still more

[3] Acts ii. 37, *sqq.*; x. 44, *sqq.*
[4] Acts ix. 31; xvi. 14; Gal. iii. 5; Ephes. i. 13; James i. 18.
[5] Phil. i. 18.
[6] Isa. lv. 10, 11.
[7] Ps. xix. 8—11; cxix.; Jer. xxiii. 29.
[8] Luke xvi. 27—31.
[9] Rom. i. 16.
[10] 1 Pet. i. 23.
[11] Heb. iv. 12.
[12] Ephes. vi. 17.

closely: it is not the Word in itself, but the Spirit by means of the Word, which brings such mighty things to pass. "Fidem nobis inspirat Spiritus Sanctus, sed Evangelii sui organo" (Calvin). We have already seen in §§ cxxiii. 5, cxxiv. 3, that saving faith is not the fruit of the man himself, but of the operation of the grace of the Holy Ghost, who ordinarily works by means. It was already shown, too, that no means of grace was so powerful as the preached Word, and thus the question cannot be kept back as to the way in which we must present the exact *connection* between the operation of the Spirit and the Word. This question is undoubtedly of significance for our thought, but fortunately its complete solution is not directly necessary for our eternal peace. Yet it is apparent, that as every operation of Spirit on spirit has a mysterious side, the exact relation between the worker and the means he employs, must still more escape our sight. Here the Gospel itself gives no direct indication; our own reflection may lead us only to a certain degree of light; and it is deserving of notice at least that the question in point was scarcely discussed at the time of the Reformation, and in and after the seventeenth century was first made a subject of express investigation and theological controversy. And this controversy can the less lead to satisfactory results, since the answer to this question is again dominated by those given to other questions, by the conception of predestination on the one side, and by a systematic dread of fanatics on the other. From the supranaturalistic side the relation between Spirit and Word is usually so described, that the operation of the two is distinguished but not disjoined the one from the other; and, properly understood, that answer contains some truth, though perhaps upon further reflection it will not prove wholly satisfactory. Word and Spirit, it is self-evident, are originally two, but where we now treat of the activity of the two, that duality cannot be otherwise conceived of, than as raised to a higher unity. If we acknowledge the personal existence of the Holy Ghost (§ liii.), and the fact that the sacred writers were illuminated and guided by Him (§ xxxix.), we must for these reasons maintain that between Word and Spirit an original, inseparable union takes place, so that everywhere where the Word works for good, an operation of the Spirit is experienced or observed, and conversely. It is the Holy Spirit Himself who speaks to us in this Word, which, without His inspiring breath, would remain nothing but a dead letter, but in His mighty hand becomes a hammer which crushes the rock into fragments. Very rightly therefore did the old Dogmatists observe that the operation of the Word is by no means a merely natural-ethical operation, as that of any other excellent book (*vis logica, rhetorica, seu moralis*), but a supranatural one, in so far as it is the Holy Spirit Himself who makes use of the Word. We must only take care not to think here solely of the force which the Holy Spirit *has* once placed in the written Word of God, but also of the *continued* operation which He exercises, and which, as a rule, is connected with the preaching of the Word inspired by Him. Never, however, may we present this continued operation as external-mechanical, like that of he knife in the hand of the surgeon, or of the sword in that of the soldier, who both make use of their weapon without themselves being inseparably connected with it. Indeed, the Spirit stands not merely above and outside

of the Word, but lives and speaks itself in the Word, as our soul in our body, as the Divine Logos in the man Christ Jesus. The operation here implied, is thus an internal-dynamical operation, supranatural in its origin, but entirely moral in its nature; and hence in unison with the nature both of the Spirit and of the Word, and of the man, who by the joint power of the two is guided into a new life.

5. Thus defined, the operation of the means of grace, of which we are speaking, though to a certain extent enigmatical, is at any rate not absolutely inexplicable. It depends of course entirely on the manner in which that means is *used*, that is, in which on the one hand the word of God is preached, and on the other heard and observed. Is it to work with real success? then must it be in truth God's word, nothing more, but also nothing less; the law in all its severity, but the Gospel, too, in all its loveliness; and that word not mechanically repeated or read, but with all one's might attested, enjoined, and preached by a personality filled with the Holy Spirit. We feel the wide extent, but at the same time the absolute necessity of this demand. Well might Luther say, "He who understands the art of rightly distinguishing between Moses and Christ may indeed be called a Doctor." The right "dividing" of the Word [13] is of the highest importance; but of what avail in the end is even this art, if the true life within is still wanting? Only life can produce life, steel only can call out sparks from the flint. From the flint, but not from the block of ice; and as little operative power is to be expected here, when the feeling of the man's own heart is wanting. In this respect we meet with nothing more real and instructive than the parable of the sower.[14] There is a moral—rather an immoral—standpoint, from which the preaching of the Word, according to God's righteous judgment, leads not to the amendment, but to the deterioration of the spiritual state;[15] and certainly no one has less right to dispute the power of God's Word as a means of grace, than he who despises it, or at any rate does not use it aright. Therefore the Apostle constantly declares it a special cause of thanksgiving that the Word is received as it ought to be,[16] and the Lord Himself emphatically declares that a man must *have*, in order that he may obtain more.[17] Where, however, the field is in good order and properly prepared, there we may not only expect, but to a certain extent declare, that the seed shows its fruit. It is, indeed, the living Word of the eternally existing One Himself; the Spirit which speaks in it is the Spirit of Truth and Power, directing Himself to the spiritual principle of life in man, who himself is allied to God, and formed after His image. The flame from above seeks as it were the fuel deeply concealed within; how can it be where the two really come into contact, but that the fire on the altar must burn! Such a word cannot possibly die away like an empty sound in the air—it works either for death or for life; like Christ Himself, it serves, if not to the fall, then to the rising again of many.[18] "As the grain of wheat, the fruit of vegetable life, carries in itself the power to reproduce a vegetable

[13] 2 Tim. ii. 15.
[14] Matt. xiii. 3—9.
[15] Isa. vi. 9, 10; Rom. xi. 7—10.
[16] 1 Cor. i. 4—6; 1 Thess. ii. 13.
[17] Matt. xiii. 12.
[18] Luke ii. 34; 2 Cor. ii. 14.

life of its own kind, so also does the Word of God, the fruit of the Holy Spirit, carry in itself the power to produce spirit" (Kahnis).

6. When placed in its due light, the doctrine relating to the Word of God as a means of grace is of indubitable *importance*, both theoretically and practically. It offers a valuable weapon against Mysticism on one side, and Rationalism on the other. Not only had the age of the Reformation to resist the eccentricities of the friends of the inner light, but even in later days this last was often praised and exalted in a manner through which the value of the written Word was far too much ignored. Think of the Quakers in England; of the Mysticism in the Romish and Protestant Churches of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; of the many morbid efforts even in our days, in which the indispensable connection between grace and means of grace is entirely overlooked. On the other hand it has been, and still is, but too often forgotten by the opposite side, that the Word of God, though with reason loudly praised, still could not of itself avail without the Spirit, which is and continues to be the proper agent of all true spiritual life. The zealot desires the Spirit without the Word; the Rationalist, in so far at least as he will still know and hear of it, the Word, but without the Spirit; against both the supporter of "sound" doctrine has an important truth to maintain. On the one hand, "Christian knowledge can at no time and in no place be produced from a merely internal source,—and every appeal to the inner light while the external word is despised, develops into fanaticism" (Nitzsch). But even on the other "frustra cœcis se offeret Lux, nisi Spiritus ille intelligentiæ aperiret mentis oculos, internus doctor, cujus operâ in mentes penetrat salutis promissio" (Calvin).—The recognition of this truth leads and disposes every Christian, and the minister of the Gospel in particular, to a thankful estimation of the Gospel and of his office, which is so terribly misunderstood in our day.[19] It calls for ardent prayer for the indispensable operation of the Spirit as often as the Word is preached.[20] It excites to increased precision as to the way in which that Word is preached and heard.[21] It supports and confirms the hope that the Word, apparently so weak and so much despised, will still in the end be the spiritual force which is to conquer and re-create the world. Without that faith, who would dare to continue the combat? with this faith, who can still despair of the victory?

Compare what has been already said in § xl. as to the value of Holy Scripture; also the prize essays quoted on p. 672; and specially, J. MÜLLER, *Das Verhältniss der Wirksamkeit des H. Geistes zum Wort*, in *Studien und Kritiken* (1856), ii., iii., and also included in his *Dogmat. Abhandlungen* (1870), pp. 127—277.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

What must we understand here by the Word of God? and why, in treating of the doctrine of the means of grace, is such special value attached to the preaching of it?—Has the Word of God as a means of grace been estimated at the same value at all times, and in all sections of the Christian Church?—The influence of the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination on the presentation of the connection of the operation of the Word and the Spirit.

[19] 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6. [20] Ephes. i. 17, 18. [21] 2 Tim. ii. 15; Luke viii. 18a.

—Development of the dogma in the Lutheran theology of the 17th and 18th centuries.—Antithesis of Rationalism and Supranaturalism on this point.—The doctrine of the inner light among the Quakers.—The Labadists and the allied sects.—Does the Word of God, as a means of grace, still retain any value for the Modern consciousness?—By what is its operation retarded or advanced?—Cannot even household worship, as well as edifying lectures, etc., be considered as means of grace? and if so, on what conditions?—Glory of the Word, and the ministry of the Gospel.—Has it still, even in our day, a task of its own to fulfil?

SECTION CXXXVII.—THE SACRAMENTS.

The faith, wrought by the word of preaching, is strengthened by the visible tokens and pledges of the promises of the Gospel, which, instituted by Christ Himself, are usually denoted by the name of Sacraments. The sacred institutions, besides Holy Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, which the Romish Church has included in this category, differ too much in origin, nature, and influence from these two, to be placed unconditionally on a par with them. Even the entire churchly conception of a Sacrament requires a decided revision, before it can be called the exact expression of the spirit of the New Testament. From the Evangelical Reformed standpoint in particular, Christian Dogmatics has to be on its guard, as well against materialistic over-estimation, as against spiritualistic ignoring of the significance and force of these institutions of the Lord.

1. In by far the greater number of the Confessions of Faith are the Sacraments of the New Testament mentioned, next to the Word of preaching, as means of grace, and commended with a greater or less degree of emphasis. This is the case, too, in the Netherlands Church. In the practice of the Romish Church they stand even above the Word; and when the Greek Church in her creeds speaks of means of grace, she thinks exclusively of the Sacraments, without even once mentioning the Word of God. Yet even in the Protestant Church, as is well known, there prevails with respect to these very rites no slight difference of opinion, and it will thus be necessary in the first place to treat of the doctrine of the Sacraments in general, before we speak separately of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

2. We need not be in the least surprised to find that generally in almost every religion, and so in the Christian too, rites perceptible by the senses are required. Even in his most spiritual and holy acts, man does not cease to be a sensuous being. In the East, in particular, symbolical actions,

even in the sacred domain, are as generally acknowledged as they are highly estimated. The worship of Israel also had such in abundance; *e.g.*, the sacrifices, the sacred meals, religious washings, etc., more especially circumcision and the Passover, not incorrectly compared with the Baptism and Holy Communion of the New Testament. It was in accordance with the profound wisdom of the Lord, that He, when founding a spiritual worship of God for men and sinners, placed in it also external rites, though these were but two in number, and of the utmost simplicity, suited and intended to be reverenced in all ages and places by all His followers.

3. These solemn acts, ordained by Christ Himself, have in theological and ecclesiastical usage for centuries been denoted by the obscure and unbiblical name of *Sacraments*. In explaining this word we must carefully distinguish between classical and patristic usage. In the former *Sacramentum* (derived from sacrare=dedicare, initiare) denotes generally anything dedicated to God, *e.g.*, the sum of money deposited with the high priest before the commencement of an action at law, and specially, the military oath of the Roman soldiers. In the other it was the translation of the Greek μυστήριον, and was thus used to denote things which in the estimation of believers possessed not only a holy and reverend, but also a certain concealed mysterious character. Thus, for example, the Lord's prayer, the sign of the cross, the doctrine of the Trinity, were stamped with the name of *Sacramentum;* or the sacrament of the Incarnation was spoken of. This name, however, principally owing to the influence of Tertullian, was specially given to the solemnities of the New Covenant, and the more men, in their desire to gain converts, tried to transplant the mysteries of heathendom (*disciplina arcani*) on to the Christian soil, the more willingly, too, did they begin to surround these acts, so simple, and yet so full of meaning, with a halo of mystery. The idea of a Sacrament, which is not found anywhere in the New Testament, became thus the abstraction of the concrete, as given in Baptism and the Lord's Supper; and these latter rites were so presented, that they in every respect corresponded to the ever more developed conception of a Sacrament. The Sacrament was more and more regarded as a visible sign of an invisible grace, which was directly imparted from God through the Church to her members; and in the School of Augustine originated the formula "accedit Verbum ad elementum, et fit Sacramentum." Gradually the number of these churchly mysteries increased, though in the general estimation Baptism and the Lord's Supper continued to be placed in the foreground. In the Middle Ages, in particular, the doctrine of the Sacraments was developed with eagerness; Rabanus Maurus spoke of four, Dionysius Areopagiticus of six; while, after long-continued hesitation, during which Peter Damiani spoke for a time of twelve sacraments, the sacred number of seven was determined by Peter Lombard, and defended with scholastic acuteness against a weak opposition. Thomas Aquinas, in particular, sought more to elucidate the idea and operation of the Sacrament; and under his influence it was considered and described as a thing perceptible to the senses, which, according to the Divine institution, possesses the power both of depicting and producing holiness and righteous-

ness. According to this presentation the power of the Sacraments is purely objective; they work what they effect by the administration itself (*ex opere operato*), entirely independent of the manner in, or disposition with, which they are received, provided only there be present in the administrator an earnest intention to administer them. Their value differs; three of them—Baptism, Confirmation, Ordination—imprint on him who receives them an indelible mark (*character indelibilis*). Besides these seven sacraments the Romish Church has still a number of sacramental acts (*Sacramentalia*), blessings, consecrations, etc., which, though not immediately, yet still mediately, are bearers of a Divine grace, and which, usually administered by the higher spiritual powers, may not be neglected or despised. The Romish doctrine of the Sacraments was first decreed by the Council of Florence (1439), and subsequently by that of Trent, with the utmost exactness.

4. It will not be necessary to confute at any length this Romish doctrine of the Sacraments; here, if anywhere, history has pronounced a decisive judgment. Thus much is already apparent, that the five solemn acts which Rome places by the side of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, differ too greatly from these to be comprehended with them in one conception. They are (1) Confirmation (*Confirmatio*, χρῖσμα) at first administered with Baptism, afterwards conceived of as a separate sacramental act, which might only be performed by a Bishop, after a child was at least seven years old. Anointing here takes the place of the laying on of hands of Acts viii. 17; and when it is done, the words are spoken, "Signo te signo crucis, et confirmo te Chrismate salutis, in nom. Patris," etc. It must serve to strengthen the principle of the new life, which is thought to originate in Baptism in the young professor, who is at the same time dedicated as it were by this act to be a soldier of Christ. (2.) *Confession*, the Sacrament of Penance, of which the chief elements are *contritio cordis*, *confessio oris*, *et satisfactio operis*, and which is justified by an appeal to James v. 16. According to the ordinance of the Lateran Council (1215) it must be made at least once a year, when all deadly sin which has been committed must be enumerated. (3.) *Extreme unction* (*viaticum*), the anointing of the principal limbs of the dying person, according to the direction of James v. 14, 15, compared with Mark vi. 13, which since the ninth century has been elevated into a Sacrament, the administration of which will bring about forgiveness of sins, as well as the amelioration of bodily sufferings. (4.) *Ordination*, also the work of the higher spirituality, by which persons are received into the separate spiritual state by various steps and degrees, and are empowered to minister at the altar. Lastly, (5) *Marriage*, whose sacramental character is established by an appeal to Eph. v. 32, and the entire dissolution of which, even in the case of adultery, is not sanctioned by the Church.

That all these ceremonies may be considered of relative value, and, partially at least, of beneficial effect, can be as little denied, as that their number might still be easily increased, *e.g.*, by the washing of the feet,[1] which was really considered by Bernard of Clairvaux as the Sacrament of

[1] John xiii. 14, 15; 1 Tim. v. 10.

the remission of daily sins. and even in the present day has continued to be observed. But it is plainly self-evident that if institution by Christ Himself is an essential element of a Sacrament, this cannot in any way be demonstrated, at least with respect to any one of the five indicated above, and equally is it seen that the exegetical and historical basis of this entire edifice is extremely rickety. For example, it is impossible, after impartial exegetical investigation, to find in James v. 14—16, sufficient ground for extreme unction and confession, as these are now presented by the Church of Rome. If some of the Sacraments are already rooted in the earliest ages of Christianity, of others the relatively late origin is demonstrated, while of others (*e.g.*, Ordination) it is impossible to show what special truths or promises of the Gospel were exhibited by them, or promised to them. In all this domain, indeed, the caprice is apparent, since it cannot be discovered why Confession should be considered a Sacrament, while prayer is not; or marriage, while the fatherly relation is not so regarded. That even the seven cardinal virtues or cardinal sins would justify the exact number of seven Sacraments, any more than the seven candlesticks or the seven churches of Asia Minor, does not need to be declared. Most of all does the doctrine cause just offence, that these Sacraments impart supra-natural grace, even when they are administered in an absolutely mechanical manner (*ex opere operato*), and are partaken of without any anxious desire for salvation, "nisi impediat obex peccati mortalis." (G. Biel). The theory of such a purely magical operation promotes not merely the most sad superstition, but also is in irreconcilable opposition with the demand of personal faith and conversion as the first condition for the enjoyment of grace. If now to all this we add that some of these Sacraments (*e.g.*, extreme unction) have been the cause of unprofitable struggles in the Church itself; that others (*e.g.*, confession) have been, and still are, most terribly abused; and that almost all, directly or indirectly, have a tendency to exalt as high as possible the churchly and priestly power, and, on the other hand, to limit the honour of Christ as the only and all-sufficient Saviour, then we shall not be surprised that already before the Reformation Wicliff, the Waldenses, and others had lifted up their voice against the Romish doctrine of the Sacraments.

5. Already had the hand of the Reformers at the commencement cut off many injurious suckers from the over-grown plant; and in, and specially after, the sixteenth century it is impossible to deny a great advance, or better, a return to that which is good with regard to the doctrine of the Sacraments. If even in the Lutheran Church confession was modified, rather than abolished, and if at the beginning Melancthon was induced to consider ordination as a Sacrament, still the number of the Sacraments was soon brought back both by the Lutheran and Swiss Reformers to the well-known two. Even the doctrine of their operation *ex opere operato* was emphatically opposed by both sides; the absolute necessity of personal faith for their advantageous use was distinctly recognised, and the whole array of Romish Sacramentalia was rejected as "ludibria et imposturæ." By both in the end were the Sacraments of the New Testament regarded not merely as signs of the profession (*signa professionis*) on the part of the recipients, but as means of grace (*adminicula gratiæ*) on the part of their

Founder. Thus the Sacrament operates, but not as a consequence of the moral effect brought about by the reception, but because in it something is actually given and imparted by God. "Signa illa minime sunt vana aut nuda" (*Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxxiii.). And this is recognised by both the Lutheran and Reformed Churches. To the question, what do we receive? however, a different reply is given, since according to the Lutheran theory the Sacraments are actually *vehicles* of grace; while on the other hand, according to the Reformed view, they are only *signs and pledges* of the highest grace, which *represent*, and in fact *guarantee*, it as such to believers; while according to the Lutheran view they also *impart* this directly. They are therefore called in the Heidelberg Catechism (answer 66), "holy visible guarantees and seals, established by God, through which He, by our use of these, enables us the better to *understand* and *receive* the promise of the Gospel, concerning the forgiveness of and purification from sin."

6. This is not the place for entering on an extended criticism of the Lutheran conception of the Sacraments; else it would not be difficult to demonstrate that it did not remain entirely free from the leaven of Rome, and that in its consistent development it also leads back to the doctrine of the *opus operatum*. To the Reformed proposition, that the signs of the New Testament as such do not immediately impart, but only visibly represent, the gifts of the grace of God (*non exhibent, sed significant*), though the personal enjoyment of this grace is secured to the believing use of them; to this doctrine, in our estimation, is undoubtedly due the praise of greater simplicity, clearness, and Scripturalness. It is, however, a different question, whether the entire conception of the Sacraments might not be removed from the Christian doctrine of Salvation, without serious loss; and we are almost induced to give an affirmative reply when we see the great amount of confusion and strife which has been caused by this churchly, but not Scriptural presentation. We apprehend, at least, that Melancthon at first spoke rather of signs than of Sacraments, as when in his *Loci* (1521) he writes, "Quæ alii *Sacramenta*, nos potius *signa* appellamus, aut, si ita libet, signa Sacramentalia;" that in later days the Quakers not only considered these signs and seals themselves superfluous, but had already protested against the name; and that, to mention no others, Schleiermacher (*a. a. O.*, § 136, *sqq.*) condemns the general treatment of Baptism and the Lord's Supper under that appellation, and wishes that the entire expression should not, if choice were given, be naturalised in the ecclesiastical usage. Perhaps, if this comprehensive appellation were not used, some of the misty views concerning the significance and force of Baptism and the Lord's Supper might be avoided. On the other hand, however, we must confess that much may be said in favour of combining two relatively equivalent institutions under one banner; that which has already existed for a long time, even if only for the sake of clearness, has a certain right of existence, if at least it is not absolutely pernicious; and since even the New Testament seems once to point out the two institutions simultaneously,[2] so may the churchly conception of the Sacraments be maintained as combining the two, provided that everything be removed from it which cannot

[2] 1 Cor. xx. 1, *sqq.*; perhaps 1 Cor. xii. 13; but not Ephes. v. 26—29; 1 John v. 6.

be sufficiently justified from the doctrine of the Gospel respecting Baptism and the Lord's Supper. *The right view of Baptism and the Lord's Supper must not be derived from a conception of the Sacraments formed in later times; but on the contrary, if that name is to be retained, the pure conception of the Sacraments must be deduced from the accurate view of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.*

7. After all that has been said the question arises, where we henceforth use the word Sacrament only for convenience' sake as a scientific term, and prefer still to speak of the signs (signs of union, given as a security, as Nitzsch called them), whether, and in what degree, we can continue to regard Holy Baptism and the Holy Communion as properly so-called *means of grace.* If by this question men mean, Were Baptism and the Lord's Supper ordained by the Lord to impart immediately a special Divine gift of grace? the answer cannot possibly be in the affirmative. Indeed, the direct object of the two institutions is well known, and undoubtedly exhibits an entirely different character. Baptism was ordained by the Lord for solemn admission into the community of His followers; the Lord's Supper for the perpetual remembrance of His death for the forgiveness of sins. But without considering this immediate object, the two ordinances, as will soon be apparent, are undoubtedly at the same time *intended* to *depict* and *represent* the great subject-matter of the Gospel. Where that representation is made in the name and authority of the truth itself, there it cannot be a fallible presentment, but must also bear the character of assurance and *confirmation.* And where these are received with a right feeling of the soul, there it cannot but be that the faith, already present, receives thereby *strengthening* suited to it. In this spirit we see also the idea of sign and seal most closely joined in the presentment of the Apostle Paul in Rom. iv. 11. That both Baptism and the Lord's Supper really provide for the Christian a beneficial strengthening of his faith, will be evident from an investigation of these two. This only must be brought prominently forward: *we can only speak of a beneficial operation of these institutions as means of grace, in so far as they are truly regarded, administered, and received in the spirit and according to the will of Him who ordained them.*

8. Thus we come gradually to indicate the point of view from which, in the spirit of the Gospel and the Reformation, these two institutions must be regarded, and the *value* to be attached to the precious legacy of the highest wisdom and love. While we leave it to others, who will be wise beyond that which is written, to involve themselves in all kinds of speculation and doctrinal definitions as to Sacramental character, Sacramental acts, Sacramental grace, etc., we place ourselves simply at the standpoint of the New Testament, and regard its institutions by the light of our inmost needs; and then we discover, from a glance at the past and the present, abundant reason to be on our guard, as well against a materialistic over-valuing as against a spiritualistic ignoring of the so-called Sacraments. Of the first—as will soon be evident—we find traces in the doctrine of the Sacraments held, not only by the Romish, but also by the Lutheran Church, and not less obviously in the many concealed Romanising tendencies and currents which are discovered in different degrees beyond this circle of

views. As representatives of the other we have the Socinians, who conceive of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as purely external ceremonies, by which men simply show that they are joined to the Christian Church, and think with gratitude of the death of the Lord; the Quakers, who not only reject the word Sacrament, but also the thing itself completely, while they acknowledge nothing but a Spiritual Baptism, and a Spiritual Supper with Christ, in the sense of Rev. iii. 20; the Rationalists, who even though they leave the sign itself unattacked, overlook or deny the peculiar point denoted by it; not to mention many others, to be found in every Church, who undoubtedly regard these solemnities, as institutions of Christ Himself, with a certain reverence, but would hardly feel that they had suffered any actual loss if these were omitted or abolished. In contrast to this onesidedness on both sides, must be recognised and estimated the high value of the Sacrament as the "verbum visibile," thoroughly suited to our capacity and needs. True, some find in these a sublime accommodation to the low standpoint of those who thus as it were by print and painting see the invisible things brought as closely as possible within reach of their imagination. But we must also recognise that the Lord really showed "that He knew what was in man" when He willed both to separate and to combine most closely His followers in this very way. Baptism and the Lord's Supper have both indispensable value, (1) as the unequivocal expression of the chief truth of Christianity, which, even if it were nowhere announced again in words, would here be always to be read in symbolical characters; (2) as a striking symbol of the spirit of true Christianity, as a spirit of faith and love, of purity and holiness; (3) as a constant standard of union for the Christianity, now so lamentably divided, which is always a partaker "of one baptism, one bread and one cup;" and —last, but not least—(4) as a powerful means of strengthening that faith which has already been produced in a more or less advanced degree by the preaching of the Word. Certainly the old rule is here applicable, "Necessitas Sacramentorum non est absoluta, sed ordinata." But still, "who is so strong in faith, that he can dispense with the external support, the visible pledges, with which the Lord Himself meets our weakness? What kind of faith is that which thinks it can do without the proper ordinance of the Lord? Who is the singular person who thinks himself so intimately joined to the Lord and the invisible Church, that he can do without the visible bond of union?" (Martensen.) But this leads us on to the separate consideration of each ordinance, to which we must now proceed.

Compare C. GLOECKLER, *Die Sacram. der Chr. Kirche, theor. dargestellt* (1832); V. GROENE (†), *Sacramentum, oder Begrip und Bedeutung von Sacrament in der alten Kirche bis zur Scholastik* (1853); G. L. HAHN, *Doctrinæ Romanæ de numero Sacramentorum septenario rationes historicæ* (1859); also, *Die Lehre von d. Sacr. in ihrer geschichtl. Entwicklung innerhalb d. abendl. Kirche bis zum Conc. v. Trente* (1864), and specially G. E. STEITZ'S elaborate and important article in Herzog, *R. E.*, xiii., pp. 226—286.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Are not ordinances, such as those discussed here, opposed to the great principle in John iv. 24?—History of the interpretation of the word Sacrament.—How was it that the doctrine of the Sacraments was developed, principally in the Middle Ages, with such

special care and prepossession?—Further criticism of the Seven Sacraments.—Zwingle's conception of the Sacraments compared with that of the other Reformers.—Elucidation of, and judgment upon, the opinion of the Quakers.—To what extent may it be asserted from the Reformed standpoint, that actual grace is imparted by the Sacraments?—Further discussion of the objections which may be brought against the presentment of the Sacraments as means of grace.—The doctrine of the Sacraments in the Greek Church.—The Sacramentalia of the Romish Church.—What agreement and what difference is there between the so-called Sacraments of the Old Testament and those of the New?

SECTION CXXXVIII.—HOLY BAPTISM.

Holy Baptism, the means of incorporation into His Church ordained by Christ Himself, is at the same time the sign and seal of the forgiveness of, and purification from, sins, promised by the Gospel to every believer, and as such, an ordinance of inestimable value. Yet is there as little ground to assume with the Romish Church the absolute necessity of Baptism to salvation, as with the Baptists to limit the administration of it solely to adults.

1. We begin with the consideration of Baptism, though it was first ordained after the Last Supper, not only because this sign is received at the entrance into Christian and Churchly life, but also because there has been less controversy about Baptism than about the Lord's Supper. We must first view the ordinance itself in the light of history, in order to maintain the accurate conception of it against mistaken ideas, and to fix its place among the means of grace of the New Testament.

2. As we inquire into the *origin* of baptism, we must carefully distinguish between the more remote and the more immediate origin. In the first case we naturally think of the religious washings and purifyings already in use in the Old Testament,[1] and oftentimes presented in the prophetic language as a symbol of moral purifying.[2] The Essenes, too, had these rites of purification; and though it is far from certain that the so-called Baptism of Proselytes was already in use at the time of Jesus, that of John had not only preceded His, but at the beginning had been continued by His own disciples.[3] Yet we should fall short of the truth if we should see in Christian Baptism only an altered form of the Baptism of John. The Baptist, in Matt. iii. 11, has already pointed out the great distinction between the two; and the King of the Kingdom of God, by His manner of ordaining Baptism, has Himself given to it the character of initiation into the personal enjoyment of the blessings of the *new* dispensation. The administration of Baptism finds its historic basis in the peculiar and undoubted

[1] Gen. xxxv. 2; Num. xix. 19, *sqq.*
[2] Isa. i. 16; Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Zech. xiii. 1.
[3] John iv. 2.

command of the Lord, given shortly before His departure from the earth, to His first Apostles.

3. The *institution* of Baptism is related in Matt. xxviii. 18—20.[4] It is no matter of surprise that the genuineness and authenticity of this narrative has been doubted in later days by the Tübingen School and Scholten, where the naturalistic criticism of the Gospel at once assumes the systematic character of the criticism of tendencies. If the Lord has not risen again from the dead, certainly He cannot have spoken what we read in the last verses of St. Matthew's Gospel. But it is not proved in any degree, that these verses exhibit a legendary character, and were first added to the original Gospel of St. Matthew by a later and untrustworthy hand. Nor is the inner unity of this Gospel broken, if the consideration of it be impartially made, even in the last chapter. To him who recognises the Lord as the glorified King of the Kingdom of God, a last command like this is acceptable on internal grounds ; and a practice so ancient and universal as the Baptism of the Apostles would be absolutely incomprehensible to us, if it had not its firm basis in the Master's own command.—As to the meaning of the words of institution in St. Matthew : to baptise εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τ. Π., κ. τ. λ., cannot denote anything but to baptise into the recognition and confession of Him, whose essence is here revealed in the triple name.[5] In the Father we think of God as the *Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ ; in the *Son*, of our Lord in His metaphysical relation of existence to God ; in the *Holy Ghost*, of the other Comforter, whom the Son would send from the Father, and who, distinguished from both by καὶ, is indicated by the singular ὄνομα in His inseparable unity with the two. By prescribing Baptism *in* or *to* that name, the Lord will by no means lay down a fixed formula, which he who baptises must unalterably employ in the administration of that holy sign ; this, if anything, would have been little in His spirit, and besides, He would have expressed Himself differently. He simply expresses the subject-matter of the confession, to which Baptism obliges one, and which he who undergoes it, makes his own ; which thus, as actually was the case in the ancient Church, may be pronounced by the lips of the person to be baptised, in the form of a creed. Therefore no one need be surprised that even in the Apostolic age persons were baptised solely in the name of Jesus,[6] by which indeed, at least among the Jews, the confession of the name of the Father was presupposed, while certainly there was not an entire silence as to the Holy Ghost.[7] There would even be no reason whatever to enforce the entire and unaltered use of the Baptismal formula, if there were no ground to suspect that resistance to its use ordinarily originates in an inner repugnance to the confession itself here required by the Lord. This confession here is the main point ; and where the custom does not prevail that it be repeated by him who is baptised, the community has a right to claim that it be spoken without mutilation by the baptiser, according to the very words of the Lord.

4. Concerning the proper *intention* of Jesus, it has been asked in earlier and later days, does He here speak only of the manner in which Jews and

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[4] Compare Mark xvi. 16.
[5] Compare Rom. vi. 3 ; 1 Cor. i. 13 ; x. 2.
[6] Acts ii. 38 ; x. 48 ; xix. 5.
[7] Acts xix. 2.

Heathen must be engrafted into His Church? or did He really wish that, even when the Kingdom of God was already founded, this sign should from generation to generation be administered to all His followers? We confess that the words of institution themselves do not directly require the latter, but nevertheless we believe that both were contained in the spirit of Jesus Himself. The promise which immediately follows the injunction to baptise,[8] plainly demonstrates that His gaze reached infinitely further than the Apostolic age; the command to teach and baptise all nations can hardly be limited to one single generation of these nations; and if baptism be really a privilege, we do not see why a nation already Christianised, should henceforth continue to be deprived of that privilege. Indeed, baptised nations, among whom baptism, and consequently personal confession, was no longer practised, would but too soon be in danger of sinking back to the level of their original heathenism. If the words of Mark xvi. 16 were spoken by Jesus Himself—and we see no reason to doubt this, even in the well-known state of the critical question—then He makes the salvation of all, without any limitation, dependent on belief and baptism. Thus no one can actually enter the kingdom of God without being first baptised,[9] whilst it is consistent alike with the nature of the institution and the spirit of the Founder, that this sign should only once be received. Repetition of baptism of itself destroys the character of the act. Hence it is nothing more than reasonable, that all Christian Churches as a rule recognise each other's baptism as valid, while we can only speak of re-baptism in case there exists a legitimate doubt whether baptism has actually been administered according to the institution of the Lord.

5. As to the *administration* of Baptism as a solemn initiation into the Church of the Lord; it ought properly to be administered in the midst of His Church, whether gathered together as the congregation or the family. Naturally it is entrusted to the same persons to whom the Lord has committed the teaching of His people, whilst baptism in case of necessity, perhaps by entirely unauthorised hands, can be justified only from the standpoint of those who, in opposition to the Gospel, teach an absolute need of baptism for salvation. That baptism should be administered with pure water, without the addition of any other element, is certainly more in accordance with the spirit of the Lord and His first witnesses, than the contrary; while it may be left undecided whether the sprinkling should be done only *once* or *thrice*, though, from a liturgical point of view, perhaps the latter seems preferable. This sprinkling, which appears to have first come generally into use in the thirteenth century, in place of the entire immersion of the body, in imitation of the previous baptism of the sick, has certainly this imperfection, that the symbolical character of the act is expressed by it much less conspicuously, than by complete immersion and burial under the water.[10] On the other hand, however, the efficacy and value of baptism happily does not depend on the quantity of water used; and we must not overlook the fact, that probably, even in the earlier form, the *sprinkling* with more abundant water, as a symbol of purification, will not have been entirely unpractised.

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[8] Matt. xxviii. 20. [9] John iii. 5. [10] Rom. vi. 4.

6. More important is the question as to the *Apostolic presentment* of Baptism, which from the Christian Reformed standpoint is the rule for every successive development of doctrine. It must not be left unnoticed, that in the Scriptures of the New Testament we see ourselves directed to this institution less extensively and expressly than we could perhaps expect and wish. It too may result from this, that the doctrine of Baptisms[11] belonged to the first principles of Christian instruction, which were imparted to the catechumens, and a knowledge of which was presupposed in the churches to which the Apostolic Epistles were written. Jude, James, and John do not mention it; unless we might explain 1 John v. 6 as referring to Christian Baptism. Peter speaks once of Baptism as the antitype of the water of the flood, and attributes to it, in conjunction with its sanctifying influence, a preserving power.[12] The principal source of our knowledge of the most ancient Christian doctrine of Baptism is Paul, who plainly attached the highest importance to this institution of the Lord, even though he did not consider baptising his special calling.[13] Baptised not in his name, but in the name of Christ, the believers had—according to his teaching—entered into the most personal relation with His reconciling death.[14] Through baptism they had been most closely united with Him; just as He had died for sin, and they had risen again from the water of baptism to walk with Him in newness of life. Thus in a spiritual sense they had put on Christ,[15] and received a like sign of purification and renewing, to that which circumcision had been under the Old Covenant; on account of which he once speaks of baptism as the circumcision of Christ.[16] In reality as many as had received that baptism in faith had been cleansed from their sins, as in a spiritual bath;[17] but at the same time, since there is only one baptism, they were bound to a life of brotherly love in the power of the Holy Ghost, who in baptism had been abundantly poured out on them.[18]—In all these Apostolic utterances it must never be forgotten that here they are speaking of the baptism of adults, received with full consciousness, and a believing heart, to whom the moment of their reception into the Church must already, for psychological reasons, be a decisive turning-point in their internal and external life.

7. Too early, however, we see with respect to the administration, as well as to the conception of Holy Baptism, the commencement of a sad *declension* from the genuine simplicity of the Apostolic age. Baptism is already in the first few centuries exalted in a manner which is sufficiently intelligible, but which must inevitably give rise to dogmatic misunderstanding. Baptism is regarded by Justin Martyr as φωτισμός (supranatural illumination), and by a much-loved allusion the Christian Church is compared to fishes which are born in the water, and now swimming after their great

[11] Heb. vi. 2.
[12] 1 Pet. iii. 21. There is perhaps an allusion to it in 2 Pet. i. 9.
[13] 1 Cor. i. 17.
[14] Rom. vi. 2.
[15] Gal. iii. 27.
[16] Col. ii. 11, 12.
[17] 1 Cor. vi. 11; Ephes. v. 26; Titus iii. 5.
[18] Ephes. iv. 5; 1 Cor. xii. 13.

fish (ἰχθύς) are saved in and by that water.[19] Cyprian asserts[20] that the Holy Ghost was united in a supranatural manner with the water of Baptism, even as at the creation He moved life-giving over the waters. Baptism was thus considered absolutely necessary to salvation; since it not only secured, but directly brought about, the remission of previous sins, the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and the pledge of a blessed immortality. Since sins committed after Baptism were considered unpardonable, this holy act was by many postponed as long as possible; while, when it was administered, it was illustrated by a number of emblematical ceremonies. Among these were, since the fourth century, the abjuration of the devil; the anointing with the mystical oil; the churchly consecration of the baptismal water; and after baptism a new anointing, the laying on of hands, the kiss of peace, the clothing in white robes, the carrying of burning candles, the administration of milk and honey, the change of name, etc. Where should we end, if we would name everything which in former or later days has been practised with respect to sponsors, seasons for baptism, the baptism of bells, altars, etc.? Of much more importance is it that the entire idea of baptism, in connection with these different things, departed more and more from that of the Apostles. By Augustine in particular, and since his time, infant baptism was brought into direct connection with the dogma of original sin, and considered as the means for purifying from it the child to be baptised; so that unbaptised children could not possibly be saved. If the children themselves were not yet able to believe, the sponsors must, according to the maxim, "Credit in altero, qui peccavit in altero," undertake that obligation for the child, of whom it was thus unconditionally true, "concupiscentia manet actu, præteriit reatu." Thus here was gradually formed, after the later Scholastic development of doctrine, the conception which the Romish Church now recognises as her own. To her Baptism is the Sacrament of regeneration, by means of water in the word (*Sacramentum regenerationis in verbo, Cat. Rom.*), by which the grace of God is imparted in a supranatural manner to the person baptised for the forgiveness of all (inherited and actual) guilt, and for the sanctification of the life, and thus its administration is absolutely necessary.

8. Happily, we can also speak of a *return* to a better view. No one can indeed be surprised that from the Evangelical Reformed standpoint it was impossible to be content with a doctrine which could by no means be justified before the bar of the Apostolic Scriptures, and therefore was emphatically contradicted in our confessions.[21] This doctrine is most closely allied to the magico-mechanical theory of the Sacraments, which we have already treated in § cxxxvii. Nowhere does the Gospel teach that Baptism was the washing away of sin itself, not even in Acts ii. 38, xxii. 16, where in each case we hear of conversion, and a believing calling upon the Lord, without which assuredly no baptism would in itself avail. As little is it ascertained anywhere that he who is baptised is, by submitting to that sacred act, born to new life. The words of John iii. 5 do not refer definitely to Christian Baptism, which was not yet ordained; and if—a fact denied

[19] Tertull. *de Bapt.*, c. i. [20] *Ep.* 70. 2.
[21] See *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 72, 73; *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxxiv.

by many—in Titus iii. 5, baptism, and not regeneration, is simply compared to a bath; still in no case is it taught there that baptism in itself immediately *effects* regeneration. That he who in faith underwent baptism was now reborn to new life is certain, but it does not absolutely prove that this was effected by Baptism as such.[22] Our Lord has *not* said that he "who has not believed and has not been baptised" shall be damned; but only the first of these two, as if to prove that it is not the involuntary want, but only the unbelieving despisal of Baptism, which is in His eyes culpable. Indeed, it would be inconceivable that Paul should make Baptism inferior to preaching,[23] if in his view the former was absolutely indispensable. If to all this we add the superstitious abuse and the needless pain which the Romish theory has practically caused, then shall we without doubt protest with all the Reformers against this conception, but find equal difficulty in assenting to the presentment of the rigid Lutheran party, who describe (their) Church as "the spiritual mother, who by *Holy Baptism* bears spiritual children to the Lord" (Münchmeyer). From that standpoint there would at last be no other Church but the visible Church of those who are baptised; but then the question cannot be escaped, how it is that in far the larger number of those baptised members of Christ, not a trace of this regeneration by baptism is afterwards to be seen?

9. If as yet we have shown the view which we must not take of Holy Baptism, now it is more than time to give a positive answer to the question as to the proper *significance* and value of Baptism. Baptism, viewed in the light of the Gospel, and relieved from subsequent additions, is and remains a *holy symbolical act, in the name, and by the command, of the glorified Lord of the Church, by which every one who receives it in faith is set apart from the unbelieving world, is received into the Christian communion, is assured of the saving promises of the Gospel respecting forgiveness of, and purifying from, sin, and is pledged to a new life in holiness and brotherly love.* Nothing less, but nothing more than this can we possibly find, on an unprejudiced investigation, in the word and spirit of the Gospel of the Apostles. To the question, *who* properly baptises? we cannot reply, if we wish to express ourselves with dogmatic accuracy, The Lord, or, The Church, but, The minister of the Gospel, on the authority of the Lord of the Church. He who is to be baptised—as yet we are not speaking of Infant Baptism—is supposed to be instructed, to believe, and to desire this sacred bath for himself.[24] By this he is separated from the world which lieth in wickedness, accepted into the organic body of that Church, in which the Spirit of the Lord dwells and works, and consequently is personally brought as it were under the breathing of the Holy Ghost. To this Church he is "added,"[25] and thus is in principle transferred into a new state of life. Just as was the Israelite into the Old Covenant by circumcision, so is he received into the New Covenant, of which Baptism is the emblematic sign, and the great promise of salvation is visibly presented to him in that sign. That promise of salvation refers, as is known, to the

[22] Compare our observations on this passage in Lange's *Bibelwerk*. (Eng. trans.)
[23] 1 Cor. i. 17. [24] Acts viii. 36—38. [25] Acts ii. 41; v. 14.

washing away of sin, *i.e.*, to the purification *alike* from its guilt and its stain. To us it seems impossible to separate the one from the other, and to see in Baptism only conversion typified, and *not* the forgiveness of sins, as does Doedes. The two were closely connected, both from the nature of the case, and in the promises of salvation in the Old Testament; the Gospel places Baptism in direct connection, not only with conversion, but also with the forgiveness of sins;[26] and the anxious longing of so many in different ages for baptism would remain absolutely inexplicable, if we could not assume that in it they found for their conscience in the first place a warrant of God's *forgiving* grace. No single Pauline passage may decide this great question;[27] different hints must be combined, and it would certainly be little in the spirit of the New Testament to see in the eloquent symbolism of Baptism only a demand, and not, before all else, a promise of salvation. Where that promise of salvation is *signified* in the name of the King of Truth, it is by that very deed *guaranteed* by Him, the condition of personal *belief* being always required of course. But as every covenant must naturally be reciprocal, it is evident that the baptised person, assured of God's grace, is now too, on his part, *obliged* and bound to that new life of purity and love, which connects all who "are baptised by one Spirit into one body."[28]

10. In this conception of Baptism we are in entire accord with the great principle which was confessed by all the Reformed Churches;[29] but, at the same time, we consider it highly important to confine ourselves within the limits there fixed, without taking the responsibility of that which *beyond* these has now and then, during and since the seventeenth century, been asserted even by Reformed Theologians as to the significance and effect of Baptism. As an emblematic act, Baptism is and remains for us a sign and seal of that which God in Christ *will* not only give us one day, but which He *actually* gives to the *believer* who is baptised. This, however, does not justify us in speaking of an immediate operation of grace by and through Baptism in itself, or of a proper *imparting* of the life of Christ in this holy sign, and still less, as is now and then done, in talking of a heavenly *corporeality*, whose hidden foundation is laid in Baptism. This is extra-Scriptural Theosophy, but not Apostolic Theology; and equally not the Theology of the Reformation, as the presentment, that an actual *beginning* of personal regeneration is made in every person who is baptised. With respect also to the expression, Baptismal grace (*Taufgnade*), which is borrowed by some Calvinists from the Romish and Lutheran Theologians, some degree of caution is required. Certainly to be baptised is an inestimable privilege, and in a true sense we may say with Lange, "The child is *churchly* new born, for by Baptism it is born again as a *member of the Church*." It is God's grace that the person to be baptised is as it were brought into union with the Church, and received into the organic whole of that communion, which is the sphere of operation of the Holy Ghost, without whose power regeneration would

[26] Acts ii. 38; xxii. 16; comp. Luke iii. 3.
[27] Rom. vi. 3.
[28] 1 Cor. xii. 13.
[29] *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 69—74; *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxxiv.; see also the beautiful form for Infant Baptism.

be impossible. But by Baptismal grace men often think without scriptural grounds (and this idea cannot be too earnestly resisted in principle), that in Baptism as such there is already given from above an actual *germ* of new life, which they need only preserve and develop, to remain assured of their personal share in the benefits of the kingdom of God. Could anything tend more to promote the most dangerous self-deceit, and to deprive of all its force the summons to that personal conversion, the beginning of which so many even in advanced years have to make? Once more, Baptism does not signify and seal that we are regenerate, but only what we actually have in Christ, as many of us as believe in Him. Thus it in no case works magically or mechanically, but only ethically and organically.

11. The remarks made on Baptism in general are also applicable to *Infant Baptism*, which is now practised by far the largest part of the Christian Church, and by which the peculiar character of Baptism is indeed in a certain sense modified, but by no means annihilated. It is well known that in every age objections have been made to the practice of baptising infants. Tertullian thought it unsuitable to bear the sign of forgiveness of sins at such an innocent time of life; "Quid festinat," he asks, "innocens ætas ad remissionem peccatorum?" (*De Bapt.*, c. 18.) Just on account of his high estimate of the importance of Baptism, did he think it should be postponed rather than hurried on: "Si qui pondus intelligant baptismi, magis timebunt consecutionem, quam delationem." Even when Infant Baptism had become universal, the Petrobrussians, Paulicians, Bogomili, Cathari, etc., obstinately rejected it. At the time of the Reformation it was not only contested by the Anabaptists and Mennonites, but also by M. Servetus, and in after ages by the Labadists, and the Baptists of our day. Now as before this distinction has been considered important enough to justify the existence of a separate Baptist community; in the Symbolical writings of the Netherlands Reformed Church it is expressly treated (H. C., Ans. 74; N. C., Art. xxxiv.), and though it is impossible to throw any new light upon a question which has been so often thoroughly discussed, yet we must not release ourselves from the duty of giving a reason for our conviction.

12. If, for controverting the Baptists, it were considered necessary to demonstrate the absolute necessity of Infant Baptism, we should at once confess our inability. With like candour do we recognise that this act is often defended on grounds which can hardly stand the test. This was the case when it was considered indispensable, in order to purify the child from an original guilt, which, as we have already seen in § lxxv. ii. 5, does not of itself involve any condemnation; or where men explain the operation of the Holy Ghost on the unconscious child by an appeal to Luke i. 15. We may even add, that men in this discussion, from an anti-Baptist zeal, have often overstepped the proper bounds, and have sought to prove more than was necessary or possible. The question is not, should only young children be baptised, and *must* they all be baptised, but whether *even* young children may be baptised. Not whether Infant Baptism is the very highest ideal of Baptism, but whether Infant Baptism, not less than the Baptism of adults, is really Baptism; not whether Infant Baptism is absolutely indispensable, but whether it is permissible, suitable, and in many ways beneficial; and thence, where it is in use, ought to continue to be

practised? To the question thus put we think ourselves justified in replying in the affirmative.

13. Infant Baptism must only then be considered *inadmissible*, if it could be sufficiently demonstrated that it conflicted irreconcilably either with the letter or the spirit of the Gospel. So little, however, is this the case, that the only difficulty of this kind lies in the form of the baptismal command, which (who can doubt?) properly referred to adults, but just for that reason left unanswered the question, what was to be done with the children who should be born from the adults in the bosom of the Christian Church? If this latter was to continue its existence as such, one can hardly require that no one shall be admitted into it until he be grown up. True, it cannot be proved that there were children in the households baptised by the Apostles,[30] but it would be at least strange if this were never the case; and absolutely inconceivable that if so the parents should only have asked for baptism for themselves, and not at the same time for their offspring. If they really believed that there was salvation in none other, and that the day of the Lord was already at hand, everything about them must force them to desire for their own that salvation which they had received for themselves, and could not expect from any other source. We do not find any trace of the Apostles having administered Holy Baptism to adults whose parents were already Christians; thus these could not have existed at all, or—they must have been already baptised as children. Origen actually calls this last an Apostolic tradition, and the warm antagonism of Tertullian towards it proves that in his day this custom had for long been no rarity. He who rejects Infant Baptism, because it is nowhere commanded in the Bible, must with equal right object to the observance of the Sunday, of the high Festivals of the Church, of the Lord's Supper on the part of women, but must also give up the entire principle of Christian liberty for that of legal formalism.

14. If, then, there is no insuperable difficulty with regard to Infant Baptism, it is itself to be esteemed *becoming* and *beneficial* on more than one account. We see the first partly from the tender interest which the Lord showed for children;[31] partly from the comparison with circumcision under the Old Covenant, which on its first institution was likewise administered to adults, but afterwards to their children as well;[32] partly, in fine, from the fact that children are already able in early age to feel the need of, and are capable of receiving, the gift of forgiveness of sins and purification, of which baptism is the sign and seal, and thus ought not to be constantly deprived of that sign and seal itself.—The second is apparent when we observe the blessed influence which Infant Baptism can exercise both at the time and in after years, both on the children and the parents, on the Church, which is thus sanctified to the Lord in all her members, and on the whole of society, which may by this means be more permeated in all its branches with the Christian principle of life.[33]

15. The *objections* which have been made to Infant Baptism from the opposite side may be considered important, but yet not preponderating.

[30] Acts x. 28; xvi. 33; 1 Cor. i. 16.
[31] Mark x. 13—16.
[32] Gen. xvii. 24, *sqq.*
[33] Compare Ephes. vi. 1; 1 Cor. vii. 14.

Even if children cannot understand Baptism, they are not too young to be set apart from an unholy world, and to be received into a Church which is able and willing to instruct them. The same was the case with circumcision; and it only shows what we willingly recognise, that Baptism first really becomes Baptism to the baptised infant when he comes to years of discretion, and confirms the Baptism he has received by a personal confession of the Gospel. Until this confession was made on our part, we could only speak of a Baptism as yet incomplete, but not therefore by any means unimportant: and in any case we must point with increased emphasis to the absolute necessity of proper Christian teaching with regard to this institution too. We do not deny that in many cases the Baptism of adults makes a more solemn, heart-influencing impression than Infant Baptism, particularly as this is often administered. But impression and influence are two distinct things; even the recollection of a privilege of childhood may have a blissful effect; and the superior advantage and suitableness of the Baptism of those of riper years, over Infant Baptism, would then only appear fully convincing when, as is actually the case with the stricter Baptists, the holy sign was administered to no one but to him who is undeniably seen to be a believing and converted person. Yet, as the Baptists themselves recognise that the keenest oversight cannot prevent self-deception and hypocrisy in this respect, it is difficult to see why we must consider the Baptism of adults as the only valid Baptism. There, too, as well as in other cases, men are received by this sign into a greater or less, but always mixed assembly (*église de multitude*), and thus enjoy no greater advantages than those who have been baptised earlier. With the ideal conception of the Church as a union of sincere believers and regenerate persons, vanishes every reason for the definite preference for adult Baptism. Availing ourselves of our liberty in this practice, we bring our children to Christ, and pray that He will bless them in and through this Baptism too. Who dare assert that He will refuse this? and who can fix the date, sooner or later, at which the Holy Spirit may begin in the childish heart to make the outward sign a truth and life? If anything can, certainly Infant Baptism may with the greatest right be brought into the domain of preparing grace (§ cxxiii. 2); and certainly the Lord, where He receives little children into His communion, may even in Baptism say to them, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." [34]

16. After what has been said it is not necessary to demonstrate any longer the value of Baptism; upon its proper *estimate* we add a few words. It must be acknowledged with sorrow that that estimate leaves very much still to be desired, and this more in the Evangelical than in the Romish Church. What a distance is there between the holy enthusiasm, with which men thought and spoke of this sign of the New Covenant in the second and third centuries, and the indifference, the formality, the irreverence, and the want of benefit to be observed at so many baptisms in the eighteenth and nineteenth! Even where Baptism is not administered, as in the preceding century it was at least proposed it should be, "on the ground of the virtue of

[34] John xiii. 7.

the father and the loveliness of the mother," the formula of Baptism is here arbitrarily curtailed, there repeated and listened to as a mysterious charm, and the high benefit of Baptism considered but by few. For the modern consciousness Baptism is nothing more than an empty form, whose abolition is tacitly desired and prepared for; at most it is a more or less solemn naming, and already we see the time coming when very many who have been baptised themselves will be honest enough not to wish that their children should also be baptised. Their ideal is a society without a Church, which desires no more its members to be baptised than to be circumcised. This being the case, the Church and her ministers are earnestly bound to do all they can for those who will still "save themselves from this untoward generation," to raise the estimation and effect of Baptism by family teaching, Christian instruction, and public confession, which sets the seal of truth on the Baptism received. It becomes every one who is baptised constantly to remind himself of that Baptism; ever again to renew the Baptismal Covenant with his God; always to use this sign and seal of salvation for his humiliation, consolation, and sanctification, and to watch with the utmost earnestness against the profanation or abuse of this ordinance of the Lord. The question, what the minister of the Gospel can and must do for this purpose, belongs more to the domain of Liturgics than of Dogmatics. But certainly the subject demands the most earnest consideration; for if the ignoring of John's Baptism by his contemporaries was already blamable in Jesus' eyes,[35] how much less could He endure and approve of the neglect and abuse of His own blessed ordinance! Verily, both those to be baptised, and those who administer baptism, need to be baptised by Him!

Compare, besides the oft-quoted Handbooks of Dogmatics, and of the History of Dogma, specially the important article, *Taufe*, by STEITZ, in Herzog, *R. E.*, xv., p. 428, *sqq.*, with the literature collected there. To this must be added, H. MARTENSEN, *De Kinderdoop, etc.* (1852); I. A. WOUNSER, *De Kinderdoop, beschomod met betrekking tot het bijzondere, Kerkelijke, en maatschappelijke leven* (1853); A. H. PAREAU, *De Christelijke doop naar de eigen instelling des Heeren* (1855); RICHTER, *Wesen und Recht der Kindertaufe*, in *Studien und Kritiken* (1861), ii.; A. STOEBER, *Ist die Kindertaufe schrift-und rechtmässig?* (1864); PH. R. MAEDER, *Die heilige Taufe* (1864, rigid Lutheran); F. KEFERSTEYN, *Die Kindertaufe und die Kirchen-zucht, u. s. w.* (1868); J. A. GERTA VAN WIJK, *Onze Kinderen in Christus geheiligd* (1865). Compare on the history and value of the Netherlands Form of Baptism, the essay of J. A. M. MENSINGER, *Over de Liturg. SS. der Ned. Herv. Kerk* (Haagsche Gen., 1850); and on the baptismal practice of the ancient Church, the well-known archæological essays of RHEINWALD, AUGUSTI, MOLL, and others.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Is there really ground for considering Christian Baptism to be ordained by Christ Himself?—Meaning, force, and original use of the words of the ordinance.—Significance and evidential force of 1 Cor. vii. 14.—Meaning of 1 Cor. xv. 29, and of 1 Pet. iii. 21.—The doctrine and rite of Baptism in the most ancient Church.—Augustine's doctrine of Baptism in connection with his system.—The influence of the Middle Ages.—Origin and development of the Anabaptist movements.—In what connection with one another do the

[35] Matt. xxi. 32; Luke vii. 29, 30.

Romish and Lutheran conceptions of Holy Baptism stand?—How are both distinguished from that of the Reformed Church?—Nature and origin of the presentment of the Arminians, Socinians, and Quakers on this point.—Has the Greek Church any peculiarities with respect to Baptism?—Do we perceive any real progress in the latest development of the doctrine of Baptism?—The movements of the Baptists in later days.—What value is to be attached to Exorcism in Baptism?—What opinion is to be formed as to private Baptism?—Cause of the modern ignoring and ridicule of Infant Baptism?—What can, and what ought to be done to increase the estimate of this ordinance.

SECTION CXXXIX.—THE HOLY COMMUNION.

The Holy Communion, ordained by Christ Himself as a memorial of His atoning sufferings and death, is at the same time the chosen means for strengthening the communion of faith and love between Him and all His people. As such it is regarded and celebrated in the Reformed Church, in a much better and more accurate manner than in the Roman and Lutheran Churches; although a renewed examination of the whole ecclesiastical doctrine of the communion, according to the utterances of the Lord and His Apostles with respect to this sacred rite, seems by no means superfluous.

1. Between Holy Baptism, which we have now considered, and the Holy Communion, which is now to be discussed, there exists, notwithstanding every difference, an unmistakable *connection*. Both are symbolical ordinances of Christ Himself, the one ordained before His Death, the other before His Ascension, not merely for His first, but also for all His subsequent followers. As by Baptism men are admitted into His communion, so is that communion maintained, renewed, and strengthened by the repeated celebration of the Lord's Supper. It is, indeed, quite natural that as Baptism is only received *once*, so the Lord's Supper should be repeatedly celebrated; the one is to the other as the first beginning of life to its continual nourishment (*nasci* to *pasci*). It is certainly lamentable that the apple of discord has been thrown on the very table of love; but on the other hand, in connection with the unmistakable importance of the subject, the long continued and still continuing strife has called out increased interest in the subject. If the abundance of our material obliges us to use the utmost conciseness in its treatment, we can in general follow the same train of thought which we have pursued with regard to the doctrine of Holy Baptism.

2. The *institution* of the Lord's Supper by Jesus Himself is placed beyond all reasonable doubt, and is almost universally acknowledged. Even Renan, in his *Vie de Jésus*, p. 386, assures us respecting this "farewell banquet," that "in this repast, as in many others, Jesus practised His mysterious rite of the breaking of bread." Grateful, both for this striking

information and for the reassuring certificate in the name of "science," we thus set our foot here on an incontestably historic ground. Our most ancient authority is Paul, who about the year A.D. 58 reminds the Church[1] of that which he had six years before delivered to them as to this ordinance, even as he himself had 'mediately) received it from Christ. What he there tells of it agrees in the main with what we find in the (Pauline) Gospel of Luke;[2] while on the other hand the narratives of Matthew and Mark[3] are indisputably related the one to the other. John says nothing at all about this act, most probably for the same reasons which have led him not to mention so many other words and acts of the Lord, which we know of from the first three Gospels. This silence, explicable only in the case of an Apostle, but hardly in the case of a forger, is a new proof of the genuineness of his Gospel, and does not in the slightest degree affect the credibility of the other narratives.

3. We learn the original *form* of the institution of the Lord's Supper, when we compare the narratives with one another, and combine these with proper discernment into one whole. This much is at once evident, that the Lord instituted the Supper the night before his death, on the occasion of the last Passover; that He celebrated it with His disciples, and—the observation is important, not merely historically, but dogmatically—after Judas had left the little band. It was while drinking the third Paschal cup, the cup of thanksgiving, that He uttered those remarkable words on which we are now fixing our thoughts. Told with slight variations by the different narrators, they are seen, when combined into one sentence, to run thus: "Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you: do this in remembrance of me.—Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood, the blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, (or, according to Luke and Paul, for many,) for the remission of sins; do this, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." With these words the Lord offers the broken bread and consecrated cup to His disciples, without partaking of it Himself. It is natural that these words and acts have been indelibly imprinted on their minds; while the narrative of Matthew in particular is directly derived from an eye-witness. We see no reason therefore for rejecting (with Baur and his associates) the words which Matthew has alone preserved, "for the remission of sins," as unhistorical. They are supported by sufficient evidence, and are already contained in principle in the announcement of "the blood of the New Covenant," the chief promise of which was the forgiveness of sins. By comparing it with Exodus xxiv. 7, 8, we see that the Lord did not wish to say anything less than that this New Covenant was to be founded and consecrated in His blood, and thus that this blood was shed with the definite and direct object, that there should be forgiveness of sins for the members of that Covenant.

4. It is less difficult than has been often thought to determine the *meaning* of the words of institution, with which we are chiefly concerned; if men will only forget all dogmatic differences, and place themselves simply in the frame of mind of the Speaker, and the position of the hearers. The

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[1] 1 Cor. xi. 23, *sqq.* [2] Luke xxii. 19, 20.
[3] Matt. xxvi. 26—29; Mark xiv. 22—25.

Lord is speaking and acting as one wholly penetrated by the idea of His approaching death, which as yet His disciples neither could nor would believe. In order to render them thoroughly impressed with this idea, He does and says something which must seem to them as if He had already actually suffered that death of which He had so often spoken. "*This is my body*," He says, "τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμα—and directly τὸ αἷμά—μου." *This* (τοῦτο), cannot mean anything else but the broken piece of bread which as He speaks He gives to His disciples. *Is* (ἐστίν), the word over which there has been such violent controversy, was not employed at all in the language which the Lord Himself used, but has been rightly inserted by the Evangelists in accordance with the Greek idiom, and must necessarily be conceived as the *copula* of the symbolical relation. The Lord wishes to say that this bread (this cup) represents to them His body (His blood); that the two signs, in other words, must at that moment present to them His body and His blood, both conceived of as already broken and shed. If He has thus afterwards literally said (Luke), "This cup (is) the New Testament in my blood;" it means: it is the New Testament, in that it (symbolically) contains my blood. "A symbolism of the holiest feeling, which could not be worse misconceived than by the miserable dispute about ἐστίν, which is not once mentioned by Luke" (Meyer). And if in the end He adds, "Do this in remembrance of me,"—and the genuineness of these words, only mentioned by Luke and Paul, is for internal reasons not to be called in question,—He wishes, in other words, His friends to continue to think of Him distinctly as the One who has died for their sins; as often as, gathered together in His name, they in like manner eat the broken bread and drink of the consecrated cup.

5. The proper *design* of the Lord begins already to show itself clearly to us. So far as His first disciples are concerned, He wishes not only by these eloquent symbols to convince them, as deeply as possible, of the absolute certainty of His approaching death; not only to take away the offence of that death, by making them regard it as the source of an inestimable benefit; but above all, to make obligatory on them a continual, mutual, and solemn remembrance of His atoning death, and by it to bind them most closely to Him and to each other. No one can doubt that the Eleven constantly obeyed this last command among themselves; but at the same time it is evident that already the breaking of the bread (κλάσις τοῦ ἄρτου, Acts ii. 46) belonged to the most ancient form of worship of the first Church. Everywhere where the Gospel is preached we see at once the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and Paul in particular furnishes the most important particulars respecting the Supper of the Lord.[4] In the latter quotation we find this, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show (with grateful praise) the Lord's death, *till He come*." He writes thus, undoubtedly in the expectation of the immediate coming; but even had he certainly known that this would be postponed for centuries, he would undoubtedly have uttered the same exhortation. This at any rate is certain, that the Supper, according to the original design of the Lord, must be regarded as an *abiding* ordinance for His Church. With the clear conscious-

[4] Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. x. 16, 17; xi. 23—29.

ness which He had of the central, world-historic significance of His death, it is inconceivable that He should have wished to limit the remembrance of it to a single generation. It is hardly necessary to mention how much that death merits such a constant recalling to mind, and how even the best Christian stands ever afresh in need of it. Thus the Church, certainly in the spirit of her Lord, celebrates from age to age that Holy Supper; and this is done in every Church, with the sole exception of the Quakers, who in their partial spiritualistic tendencies utterly overlook how even the constant obedience to the Redeemer's command must ever be the best means for promoting that spiritual celebration of the Lord's Supper, in the sense of Rev. iii. 20, to which they, and not without reason, attach such high value.—In what relation for the rest the most ancient observance of the Lord's Supper may have stood to the love-feast (ἀγαπή) is a question which in itself is not so important for Dogmatics; because the estimate of the Supper as a *lasting* institution of the Lord retains its truth, whatever the solution given to that secondary question.

6 Viewed in the light of the Lord's own utterances, and in those of His first witnesses, the Lord's Supper is an institution which exhibits an entirely *symbolical* character. The *symbols* are here (1) the *bread* and *wine* themselves, as signs of the Lord's body and blood; (2) the *broken* bread and *poured-out* wine, a symbolical memorial of that which took place with that body and blood on the cross for the forgiveness of sins; (3) the *eating* of the bread, and *drinking* of the wine, symbols again of personal appropriation and inner communion of life. With respect to the first and last of these, doubt cannot occur to any one; but that we are not mistaken in attributing symbolic significance to the second, is in our view already apparent from the most ancient name of the Christian Supper, that of "the breaking of the bread,"[5] as well as from the words of Paul, where he emphatically speaks of the *breaking* of the bread,[6] as contrasted with the *blessing* of the cup. Even if with most commentators we regard the word κλώμενον, in 1 Cor. xi. 24, as spurious, the action itself is raised beyond all doubt, and would hardly have been thus emphasised, particularly at Corinth, where bread was usually cut, if it had had no higher significance. Thus the Lord's Supper plainly exhibits in all its striking symbolism the character of a *memorial* feast, always intended to bring to mind the friend absent as to the body; but at the same time of a continued exercise of communion with that of which bread and wine were the emblems. It is this last on which Paul in particular lays stress in 1 Cor. x. 16, 17, where he declares that he who partakes of this bread and cup has real communion with the blood and body of Christ, which is by it represented symbolically, and by this means with Christ Himself. Thus, too, he (ver. 18, 19) who eats that which has been offered to an idol has really communion not only with the altar, but also with the idol itself, regarded as a dæmoniacal power (ver. 21).

7. Hitherto we have declared respecting the Lord's Supper merely that which in general, at least, is assented to by Christians of all denominations. The diversity appears only when we come to the question as to the proper

[5] Acts ii. 42.

[6] 1 Cor. x. 16.

relation which exists between the sacred signs and the body and blood of the Lord, and the manner in which that relation must be dogmatically defined and described. We cannot speak of this without being struck by the sad *deviation* from the Lord's simple, but deeply-significant ordinance which has spread and continues to prevail, not merely in the Church of Rome, but also, though in a less degree, in some of the Reformed Churches. Though a complete treatment of the history of dogma is here neither necessary nor possible, still we must try to gain a somewhat more accurate knowledge of the peculiar contents and mutual relation of the principal theories of the Lord's Supper.

8. According to the *Romish* Church the Lord's Supper (the Eucharist) is the Sacrament of the altar in the most peculiar and marvellous sense of the word. Christ Himself is, as the result of Transubstantiation, actually and substantially present in the holy signs, so that in the sacred host the communicant receives nothing less than the proper body and blood of the Lord. We could hardly imagine how so strongly realistic an idea could ever have arisen, if we were not aware of the preparation for it which had been gradually made in earlier times. But the fact which we have often observed, is true also of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper; we already hear, soon after the age of the Apostles, the most influential teachers in the Church express themselves in a partially mysterious, partially hyperbolic manner, which rapidly separated itself from the Evangelical representation, and caused all sorts of misunderstanding. Already in Justin Martyr and Irenæus we meet with the unscriptural conception of the Lord's Supper as a sacrifice (*προσφορά, oblatio*), at first as a sacrifice of thanksgiving, but soon as a sacrifice of expiation, even for those already dead, in which, according to Cyprian the priest occupied the place of Christ Himself. That sacrifice, already thought to be denoted in Malachi i. 11, was repeated, though still only in the sense of a memorial, as often as the Lord's Supper was celebrated; and thus the idea of a memorial service of that which had been accomplished once for all, retreated more and more into the background, while the attention was specially fixed on that which was ever again effected and brought about by this act. Men even began to speak in a mystic manner of the presence of Christ at the showing-forth of His death, and at a period relatively early to suppose a certain Μεταβολή. Justin Martyr spoke of a union of the Logos with the elements of the Lord's Supper; and distinguished Greek Fathers, such as Cyril of Jerusalem and Chrysostom, evade indeed the idea of a change of essence, properly so called, but still prepare the way for it by their hyperbolic manner of speaking. Chrysostom, for instance, does not hesitate to declare "that the most adorable thing in heaven was laid in the hand of the priest;" and when we look towards the West, we soon hear Gregory the Great ask with a tone of the most absolute certainty, "quis fidelium dubium habere possit in ipsâ immolationis horâ ad sacerdotis vocem cœlos aperiri, in illo Jesu Christi mysterio angelos adesse, summis ima sociari, terrena cœlestibus jungi, unumque ex visibilibus et invisibilibus fieri? . . . . In suo mysterio iterum nobis patitur Christus, nam quoties ei hostiam suæ passionis offerimus, toties nobis ad absolutionem nostram passionem illius reparamus." Thus the ground was gradually prepared for the seed of the new Dogma, which was first to appear fully developed in the ninth century. That which

in less distinct forms had already existed in the consciousness of many, was plainly declared in 840 by Paschasius Radbert, viz., that by the repetition on the part of the priest of the words of institution of the Lord's Supper, a properly so-called miracle of re-creation was effected. "*Corpus* Christi virtute Spiritus in verbo ipsius ex panis vinique substantiâ *efficitur*." His chief opponents were Rabanus Maurus, Archbishop of Mentz; Ratramnus, or Bertram, and Johannes Scotus Erigena; while on the other hand Hincmar of Rheims, Ratherius of Verona, Gerbert and others, sided with Radbert. The conflict remained for a time undecided; a new era commenced about two centuries later, when (1030) Berengarius of Tours declared himself warmly opposed to the doctrine of Paschasius Radbert. The advance, however, which the idea of transubstantiation had generally made, and the manner in which the circumstances of the time had become more favourable to this new dogma, was apparent from the brilliant victory which Lanfranc, the learned Archbishop of Canterbury, gained over this powerful opponent. At the Council of Vercelli (1030), and that of Rome (1050, and following years), Berengarius was forced to retract his more rational (not rationalistic) doctrine, and was only preserved from worse results by the personal influence of Gregory VII. Even where his name was revered, his mode of thought must give way; the Hierarchy was as favourably inclined as Scholasticism to the doctrine of Transubstantiation (we owe the word to Hildebert of Tours, † 1134), which was then decreed by the Church through Innocent III. at the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), and afterwards confirmed at the Council of Trent, and has up to the present time continued the expression of the orthodox confession of the Romish Church. It was honoured in a liturgical service by the introduction of the Day of the *Corpus Christi*, by command of Urban IV. (1264), and soon after by Clement V. (1311), and still forms the central point of the Mass, in which the Priest repeats this bloodless sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead.

When the fact of Transubstantiation was now decreed by the Church, the science of the Middle Ages necessarily considered itself called upon to define as accurately as possible the manner in which this miraculous change of substance took place. Lanfranc assumed a distinction between the substance and the accidents, such as the form, smell, and taste of the bread; in order to render conceivable the manner in which the last, without losing any of its properties, could be changed into the actual body and blood of Christ. Thus men called in the aid of a so-called *Impanatio* (John of Paris), in consequence of which the substance of the bread (*paneitas*) was joined with the corporeality of Christ, while by the theory of *Concomitantia* (Thomas Aquinas) they defended the proposition that in each of the two signs the entire Christ was actually and substantially present. This last proposition must at the same time justify the denial of the cup to the laity, which had been in earlier times refused by Leo the Great, and Gelasius, and which afterwards caused the terrible Hussite war. Thus the Holy Supper became literally irrecognisable, as in other ways, so in the manner in which it was celebrated by the priest alone in the silent Mass. By a number of changes in form the simple memorial meal had been reshaped into a daily repeated bloodless sacrifice for the quick and the dead.

9. We cannot be surprised that the repugnance to such a monstrous system, which had never entirely ceased, was aroused with fresh force at the time of the Reformation, and has since continued with undiminished force among millions of Christians. That repugnance would be unfair, and a sad fruit of doubt and unbelief, if it only regarded the miracle as such, which the Romish Church recognises here with adoring reverence. But it springs rather from this, that they wish to compel us, without any ground whatever, to the acknowledgment of the absolutely inconceivable, and deprive the Saviour of His crown, even where they declare they are exalting Him most highly. The literal conception of the words of the Lord's Supper appears at once impossible, if for a moment we occupy the place and feeling of those in whose presence it was ordained by Jesus. The appeal to John vi. 48—58, is of as little force, since there the Lord spoke indeed of His *flesh* and *blood*, but certainly not of His *body*, or of the blood of the New Covenant; and the Lord's Supper is here as little alluded to as, *e.g.*, in John iv. 13, 14, or xv. 1—8. It has justly been called to mind that the Romish partaking of the Supper, even supposing that it was conceivable, would be the so-called Capernaitic eating, such as was spoken of in John vi. 52, but which was at once rejected by Jesus Himself as an absurdity. Even if it were possible, it may be called absolutely useless, and must in its natural consequence lead to the abominable theory of Stercorianism. The distinction between substance and accidents, which is assumed here, is absolutely inconceivable; and a deception of the senses, such as is here supposed, is without any parallel. Shall we enumerate all the absurdities which cannot possibly be got rid of, if this doctrine be once allowed, and repeat the blasphemous assertions as to the priestly power which have resulted from it? Rather would we observe that even the most idealised presentment of the Popish Mass (Möhler and others) falls short of overcoming the serious difficulty which is felt by the conscientious Protestant, both against the repetition of the one perfect sacrifice,[7] and against the adoration of the elevated host, which, in his eyes, has always continued to be bread. It is easier to grow angry over some harsh expressions of the 80th Answer of the Heidelberg Catechism, than to prove the inaccuracy of its contents. Though many edifying words may have found their place in the Canon of the Mass from the liturgies of the Ancient Church, and though much may combine to excite feeling and imagination, this ceremony, as a whole, both theoretically and practically, is and will always be, an actual denial of the only all-sufficient Saviour, and an idolatrous worship of that which cannot be recognised as God. The doctrine of the Mass, and that of Justification by Faith contradict one another irreconcilably. We say nothing of the amount of deceit, superstition, and immorality, which the dogmas of Transubstantiation and paid Masses for the soul have caused for centuries. God be thanked that a ray of the light of the Reformation fell on the deeply stained table of the Lord.

10. In the *Lutheran* doctrine of the Lord's Supper there was certainly not wanting a strong protest against the Romish doctrine of the Mass, and of the *opus operatum;* but it gave a new proof how difficult it is to break

[7] Heb. x. 14.

away entirely from tradition. Even for Luther the Lord's Supper remained the Sacrament of the altar in the proper sense of the word, in such a way that the body and blood of the Lord is actually and substantially present *in*, *with*, and *under* the bread and wine, so that it is given and enjoyed along with the signs, by the believing to salvation, by the unbelieving to condemnation. A sacramental union takes place between the sign and the thing signified exclusively at and during the celebration of the Supper, a union which cannot be thoroughly explained, but has an undoubted basis, as is evident from the unshaken words of institution, and to this the intellect must surrender itself. The possibility of this union is grounded on the omnipresence of the Lord's glorified body, by virtue of the "*communicatio idiomatum*" (§ xcvi. 6, cvi. 2). Consequently His body and blood are eaten in the Holy Communion, not merely spiritually, but corporeally (*manducatio oralis*), though not after the Capernaitic manner, and by it the forgiveness of sins and eternal life are not only signified and sealed, but actually imparted. To this doctrine of Consubstantiation, comprised entirely in the *Form. Conc.*, Art. vii., Luther remained firmly attached; it prevented him from accepting at Marburg, in 1529, the brotherly hand of the Swiss, which was offered to him with imploring tears, and even to our day it continues, in the hands of the rigidly orthodox Lutherans, the weapon with which they not only resist the churchly union, but even the communion of the Lord's Supper with their Reformed brethren.

11. While we must esteem the childlike reverence with which Luther continued to cling to the letter of the words of the institution, as well as his feeling of the necessity of the most close communion with the body and blood of the Saviour, it is yet impossible to deny that the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper displays a far more Romish than purely Evangelical character. The explanation of the word τοῦτο in the sense of "this bread, and all that is concerned in, with, and under it, is my body," is not only opposed to the known design of the Lord, but leads back, if men are unwilling to remain half-way, inevitably to the doctrine of Transubstantiation. The phrase, "We adhere strictly to the words, and then shut our eye and senses," is a bold saying, but not quite in the spirit of Him who has also said, "The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."[8] If the body of Christ, as Luther declared even in 1534, is really "eaten and bitten by the teeth," the question of the Jews at Capernaum, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" becomes in fact a very natural question. Besides, we have already seen in § cvi. what slight ground there is for believing in the ubiquity of that body. And though we can conceive that the standpoint of Luther was determined by his repugnance to the doctrine of Carlstadt, and that of the Anabaptists, still it cannot be defended either exegetically or logically. It cannot be developed to perfec clearness, since it surrenders on the one side too much, on the other too little, and we cannot be surprised that an unmerciful but acute critic like Strauss, speaks here of "a certain I know not what, a theological oxymoron," and even "of an interchange of definitions, which mutually annihilate each other."

[8] John vi. 63.

12. In no case can this last reproach be alleged as strongly against the *Reformed* doctrine of the Lord's Supper, least of all as this was first presented by *Zwingle*. According to him, the bread and wine still remain even after consecration, both outwardly and substantially what they were, and only the eye of faith sees in these emblems the body and blood of the Redeemer. The operation of the Sacrament is not supra-natural, but moral; the enjoyment of it is not sensuous, but purely spiritual and not different from that which the Christian even without the Lord's Supper tastes, as he believingly trusts in God's grace in Christ. Yet does he remain under an obligation to observe the command of his Lord, since by it he renews the remembrance of the death of Jesus on the cross, he repeats his confession, and openly and solemnly binds himself to a Christian life. Thus all that was mysterious disappeared, and the sacramental union of which Luther spoke was in Zwingle's estimation a chimera. In some of the most ancient Reformed confessional writings this theory of his is still found unaltered, *e.g.*, in the *Conf. Bas.* i., *Helv.* i., *Tetrapol.*, etc.; but where it met with a response in not a few cases, it certainly left in many a feeling of insufficiency and incompleteness.—*Calvin*, too, was of opinion that while Luther had conceded too much, Zwingle had conceded too little, and therefore he tried to find a via media between the two, in which both the substance of the mysterious act should be sufficiently explained, and the deepest needs be satisfied. He was entirely averse to the Romish doctrine of Transubstantiation; accordingly he rejected as a "*delirium*" and "*execrandus error*," everything which savoured of it. Thus he denied the (oral) eating of Luther, but yet he saw in the elements of the Lord's Supper something more than mere "*signa nuda*." Even if in it the unbelieving received nothing but bread and wine, the believing enjoyed spiritually and with the mouth of faith the real body and blood of the glorified Christ. In the partaking of the Lord's Supper he raises himself to the Lord, who is then, as always, in heaven; but is now nourished through a mysterious operation of the Holy Spirit, attached to the signs of the bread and wine, in his soul, as the body is by food and drink. From the *glorified* body of Christ a hidden power of life flows out to him; he receives that body, not in, but yet with that bread, if only his heart is really in heaven. "Penetrat ad nos Christi caro vivifica, quæ vitæ plenitudine perfusa est, quam ad nos transmittit." Thus is imparted, not through, but yet by the use of, the consecrated signs, an extraordinary sacramental grace to the believer, in consequence of that spiritual unity which unites the Head in heaven with its members on earth. "Arcanâ Spiritus virtute in Christi corpus insiti, communem habemus cum Ipso vitam."—It is this doctrine which is presented in the great majority of the confessional writings of the Reformed Church with more or less of distinctness and rigidity, and which is accepted both in the *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxxv., and *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 77—79, as well as in the order of administration of the Lord's Supper in the Netherlands Reformed Church.

13. If we use the right given to us by Art. vii. of the *Neth. Conf.* of testing the Confession by the Gospel of the Scriptures, we do not hesitate to say that the Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper bears a much more Scriptural character than the Romish or Lutheran, and thus, in

its sharp separation between the sign and the thing signified, exhibits the same repugnance to all deification of the creature which it makes so often observable. Both the clearness of Zwingle and the profoundness of Calvin deserve respect, and no less the attempt of the latter to satisfy the deepest needs of the religious and Christian-minded soul. Yet, on the other hand, we must seriously question whether even Calvin hit upon the right word, and whether we must regard his conception as the accurate and clear expression of the last will of the Lord. In vain do we ask for the reason why he places the Lord's Supper in relation to the *glorified* body of the Lord, which as such has really no connection at all with the remembrance of His suffering and death. Nor does the presentment of a spiritual enjoyment of that glorified body in the holy signs seem more clear, unless an actual change takes place in them. It is not with entire injustice that some one has here spoken of "a supra-sensuous sensuality which is lost in itself." With all his efforts after profoundness, Calvin, in his doctrine of the Lord's Supper, seems not to have sufficiently taken as his starting-point the words of the ordinance, considered in their linguistic meaning and historical connection. He, too, has unfortunately—like Luther and the Romish Church —chosen to seek for light, not in the narratives of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul, but in the sixth chapter of John's Gospel, where the Lord, indeed, speaks of eating His flesh, and drinking His blood, *i.e.*, of the exercise of the most intimate personal communion of life with Him, but certainly not of the signs of His body and blood as a memorial of His suffering and death. The far-reaching distinction between *flesh* (σάρξ) and *body* (σῶμα), has not here attained its due recognition, and the very great words of verse 63 of John, ch. ix., "It is the Spirit which quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing," are almost entirely forgotten. In short, the whole presentment of the Lord's Supper, as spiritual food in the proper sense of the word, by which the mouth of faith receives a glorified body, even if this were conceivable in itself, cannot be exegetically justified, still less the thesis deduced from it, that by the use of this food the future heavenly body of the believer is here on earth prepared and nourished. In opposition to these unscriptural speculations, we call to mind the words of the Apostle in 1 Cor. xv. 50.

14. A purer light only then rises on this topic, when we regard the Lord's Supper first of all as a memorial meal, and besides as a meal of communion, whilst removing from this last idea all which might in the least injure the first-named character of the rite. The entire ecclesiastical view of the Lord's Supper as a *sacrifice* is absolutely unevangelical, and has been merely the first step on a long path of error. The Lord's Supper is and continues to be a symbolical act of a purely memorial design. It renews the memory of, and the communion with, the Lord, as one who has died for our sins, and who for that very reason is the Founder of the New Covenant. It is thus a meal of union, by which the Lord of the Church, who is constantly working for her highest interests, signifies, confirms, and even actually gives to those who partake of it, man by man, the chief benefit of the Covenant, the forgiveness of sins, in so far as they believingly desire and accept that benefit. Yet the sacred signs are no vehicles, but only true symbols of this grace, and all that the Gospel teaches respecting

the eating of the body and drinking the blood of the Lord can never be conceived of but in a *figurative* sense. The Lord is undoubtedly present in spirit when men are gathered together to His honour, like as in prayer, praise, and preaching, so most certainly, too, at the remembrance of His sufferings and death. According to the riches of His grace He shows Himself then most near, where the soul which longs for salvation, in obedience to His last command, most desires His communion. But in and through the signs themselves He imparts Himself, so far as we know, in no different manner than by prayer and the Word; and to His *glorified* body, as such, the showing-forth of His death has not the slightest relation. There is thus as little reason to see in the Lord's Supper a mystery in the literal sense of the word, as to seek therein the fruit of an ever-repeated miracle. What the Lord's Supper effects, it effects not in a magico-sacramental, but in a purely psychological way. At the Holy Table both the believer and the unbeliever symbolically receive the same thing, but that which for the one is a sign rich in meaning and blessing, remains to the other an unmeaning form, the abuse of which increases his righteous judgment.[9] The unbelieving use destroys not the objective significance of the Lord's Supper, but only its subjective operation and value.

15. If all the conflicting parties could unite in these well-founded results of unprejudiced exegetical investigation, we cannot deem it impossible that the Lord's Supper, which is now a continual source of division, might really become once more the centre and bond of union. In any case, our more simplified presentment does no wrong to the value of this ordinance as a *means of grace*, in the reasonable sense of the word. Indeed, it cannot but be that the well-directed remembrance of the atoning death of the Lord, and the renewed exercise of communion with Himself, as one who has died for our sins, will strengthen the weak faith, and that for us too grace is personally prepared in Him, if we really penitently receive the sacred sign. Love to the Lord and to the brethren is kindled, when with a renewed experience of His love we are all partakers of one bread and one cup. There is quickened the hope of the fulfilment of all God's promises in Christ, which necessarily follow from the renewed enjoyment of the forgiveness of sins, and all this must operate with the highest degree of consolation and sanctification, even though we do not take refuge in something absolutely supranatural, of which we have no evidence either in Scripture or spiritual experience. At any rate, we blame him who thinks all this of little value, because it is to him too intelligible. If men will still speak here of mystery, let them agree with the confession of J. Müller, "The mystery of an actual communion with Christ is the mystery of the Holy Communion."

16. By that which has been said we have in principle defined all which is desirable and necessary for the proper *celebration* of the Holy Communion according to the will of the Lord. As far as the *outward* celebration is concerned, the Lord has instituted a repast for the needs of His disciples. Hence it follows legitimately that the Lord's Supper ought to be celebrated at one common table, at the meeting together of the followers of the

[9] 1 Cor. xi. 29.

Gospel; and thus the so-called children's communion, which was observed in former ages, is as unsuitable as the household or private communion, if at least this be regarded and administered by way of a *Viaticum*. However much we may respect the desire of some sick persons for the Holy Communion, this also often depends on a sacramental conception which is devoid of all actual foundation. It might perhaps be convenient, and in the spirit of the Ancient Church, to distribute by means of the elders, at the time when the Holy Communion is being celebrated by the Church, to the believing sick the signs of the Lord's body and blood, in order that all might thus be united in spirit. Among Evangelical Protestants it is at any rate self-evident that this repast must be partaken of, not in one, but in both the signs. Unleavened bread, such as the Lord Himself has broken, may perhaps be preferable to leavened; but in no case would we use the sacred wafer, which is employed by the Romish Church, and on some occasions also by the Lutheran Church, without sufficient reason, instead of bread. At the celebration the bread must be visibly and solemnly broken, and the filled cup blessed before it is given, in the holy, unaltered words of the institution, not weakened by a paraphrase, and certainly far preferable to that which human self-will, under the influence of every "wind of doctrine," might desire to substitute in its place. As to the time for the administration of the Holy Communion, and the question how often it should be administered in the year, we have no precept from the Lord and the Apostles. It would certainly be desirable that the opportunity of partaking of it should be offered every Sunday to those who desire it, or that at least once a month the sacred feast should be offered to the congregation. The celebration four times in a year, to which custom limits the number in our Church, is surely at least too often for no one who glories in the cross of Christ as the mediate cause of his eternal salvation. It is to be desired that the Church of the Lord should be aroused to the need of an increased number of administrations of the Communion, and contrariwise it is an utterly deplorable sign of the times that we meet with persons who even think of diminishing the opportunity thus given every three months of calling to remembrance by His solemn feast His death upon the cross.

And as to the *spiritual* observance, it is self-evident that any celebration of the Lord's Supper, in which the atoning and redeeming character of the Lord's death is put into the background must also be called a profanation of the Holy Table. He who denies the resurrection of Christ cannot even rejoice in His death upon the cross, as the first Apostles did; and he who makes the Lord's Supper a humanitarian brotherly repast has indeed escaped the offence, but has also forfeited the blessing of the cross. The Lord's Supper, as we have seen, is the blessed means of strengthening belief in, and communion with, the Redeemer who has died, by the recollection of His love even unto death. Thus he who thinks he has no need of a Saviour, that is, of a Deliverer of the Lost, is as little fitted, as he who denies or doubts that even for him Christ will be the Saviour in the Evangelical sense of the word. Since then the Lord's Supper is ordained not for those who are unbelieving, but for those who have begun to believe, to it may and must come all who feel that they need their faith to be strengthened, and with sincerity of heart confess the Gospel; and the feeling of guilt and

unworthiness, if it be sincerely sorrowed over, must not keep them back from it. Arbitrary neglect of the Lord's Supper shows an indifference to the last command of the Lord, and an ignoring of one's own spiritual needs, to be looked for least of all in the true Christian. But a regular and repeated partaking of the Lord's Supper will only then operate beneficially, if it be preceded by close self-examination, be characterised by a lowly longing for salvation and believing frame of mind, and be confirmed by a genuinely Christian walk in grateful love and true holiness. Therefore is it reasonably urged that all in whom the opposite feeling is exhibited should be kept away from the table of the Lord, in order that this ordinance of the New Covenant be not profaned, nor their own condemnation increased (*H. C.*, Ans. 81, 82). If then it be impossible to remove all offence in this respect, and to celebrate here on earth a perfect Supper of the Lord; still does it remain as a consolation to faith that the table of the Lord has not only a symbolical, but at the same time an eminently *prophetic*, character. "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev. xix. 9).

Compare the articles *Abendmahl*, *Abendmahlstreitigkeiten*, etc., in Herzog, *R. E.*, i. and xix., in which will be found quoted a great abundance of literature. Among the later monographs on this holy ceremony, the most important are those of EBRARD (1846), DOEDES (1847), KAHNIS (1851), and RUECKERT (1856). Deserving of special mention is the Essay of I. H. ZIEZE, *Das Mysterium des Heiligen Abendmahls, ein Beitrag zur Einigung, u. s. w.* (1869), written to recommend the principle, "Nicht Union, *oder* Confession, Sondern Union in *neuer* Confession." For the discussion of the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper, the *Zeitschrift für Luthersche Theologie und Kirche* has for years been a medium of communication open to all. Compare, moreover, as far as the Netherlands is concerned, the shorter essays of Professors NIEUWENHUIS (1847), VAN HENGEL (1847), PRINS (1868), and others. Upon the Service for the Holy Communion, compare the Essay of MENSINGA, *l. c.* On the distinction between σῶμα, and σάρξ, the *Theol. Diss.* of T. J. VAN GRIETHUYZEN (1856). In the domain of Homiletics and Hymnology the Holy Communion supplies a much larger amount of matter than Holy Baptism. In respect to the first-named, we refer to the well-known essays of REINHARD, GRANDPIÈRRE, and MONOD; for the second, to the Collections of RAMBACH, DANIEL, etc. Compare also, as regards the Holy Communion, J. J. VAN OOSTERZEE, *Leven van Jezus*, iii. (2nd ed.), p. 179, *sqq.*, and also his *Leerredenen over den Heid. Katech.*, Afd. 28—30.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

What is the connection between the Passover and the Lord's Supper?—Reasons for John's silence as to this last.—Were the Agapæ of antiquity distinct from the Lord's Supper, or not?—Explanation and defence of 1 Cor. xi. 23—29.—What is the meaning of John vi. 48—58?—Had any misconceptions with regard to the Lord's Supper penetrated into the Church of the early ages?—History of child communion, and of the denial of the cup.—Further discussion of Transubstantiation and the Sacrifice of the Mass—Is there anything peculiar in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper maintained by the Greek Church?—The controversy as to the Sacraments at the time of the Reformation.—On what grounds do the Quakers cease to celebrate the Lord's Supper? and what arguments can be alleged against this practice?—What has become of the Lord's Supper in the hands of the Socinians, Rationalists, and modern followers of Naturalism?—The later theosophic speculations as to the operation of the Lord's Supper, as a spiritual process of Nature.—Cause of the increasing neglect of this ordinance in many Evangelical Churches.—By what means is the suitable showing-forth of the Lord's death at His table interfered with? and how can it be most powerfully advanced?—In what does the true blessing of the Lord's Supper consist? and how does it arise?

SECTION CXL.—CHRISTIAN CHURCH LIFE.

Preceded by prayer in the name of Jesus (§ cxxxv.), the use of all the means of grace must be confirmed, advanced, and, so far as needed, purified by Christian Church Life. The word of preaching, and the sacred ordinances of the New Testament will work with a more blessed result, in proportion as the mutual fellowship of the believers becomes more close, and the brotherly aspect of love is more properly observed. Conceived and applied in the spirit of the ordinance, even churchly discipline may occupy an honourable place among the means of grace.

1. It is already apparent why we could not assign to Christian prayer a place in co-ordination with other means of grace. As little can we do so to the Christian Church regarded by itself. This, however, does not destroy the fact that the Word of Preaching and the Ordinances of the New Covenant, which we have learnt to recognise as means of grace, need a bond of union, a force to make them fruitful. If we were to argue a case where the Word is preached, and the so-called signs of union are administered, but without being supported and sustained by a properly so-called Church-life, we feel at once how the force of these means, which we cannot in any case conceive to be magical, would be prejudiced and restrained. As the use of both must be inspired by the spirit of prayer, so do they both root, blossom, and bear their fruit on the soil of a Church-life, sanctified by God. Hence it is that the Apostles insist so emphatically on this,[1] and that also in our Confessional writings (*Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxviii. ; *H. C.*, Ans. 85) the right of this demand is recognised. Christian Church-life promotes co-operation in one spirit towards one great common end, and finds its expression both in the communion of faith and the guidance of love.

2. Communion of faith is specially an inward thing, yet where it exists it must necessarily manifest itself externally in the form of Church-life. Without the common public worship, especially on the Lord's Day, preaching, baptism, and the Lord's Supper would not be even possible. In the New Testament we meet with only a few and uncertain traces of the Christian observance of the Sunday ;[2] but already in the time of Pliny [3] and of Justin Martyr,[4] it is evidently an established custom, which in every age has produced inestimable blessings. Boundless would be the field which here opens to our view, if we should wish to treat of the establishment and demands of public religious worship, but we must not lose sight of the boundary between Dogmatics and Liturgics. Equally out of place is here

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 12—26; 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.
[2] Acts xx. 7 ; 1 Cor. xvi. 2 ; Rev. i. 10.
[3] Ep. x. 97.
[4] Apol. I. c. 67.

all but a mere mentioning of the value of Christian Festivals, of Christian hymns, and of well-ordered spiritual services in a narrower sphere, for rousing and strengthening the communion of faith. Experience has certainly proved this; and where here and there in the Reformed Churches there has been displayed in this domain a repugnance to everything which cannot be justified by an appeal to the letter of Scripture, there such Puritanic and Calvinistic one-sidedness is to be strongly resisted by every one who is anxious for a truly *sound* development of congregational life. In this respect, and in regard to everything which relates to Christian worship, the Netherlands Reformed Church might learn much from the Lutheran sister-Church, especially in Germany and elsewhere, and even from the Romish Church, without on that account giving up anything really essential. But, alas! it is the desire of many to be *before all things Reformed*, and that in or even beyond the sense of the word of the seventeenth century, whilst despising all which tends to be Reformed *too*, but Evangelical and Protestant before all. Thus the gulf between the Church and modern society is made wider, while neither of them is brought a step in advance.

3. The communion of faith must be accompanied by the oversight of love, to which the Apostles, entirely in the spirit of the Lord, had already repeatedly exhorted the Church. (See 1 Thess. v. 14; Heb. iii. 13; x. 24, 25; James v. 19, 20.) It is fully evident that this brotherly display of love is of inestimable value "for the perfecting of the saints." We have already seen what a high value Luther attached to the "mutuum colloquium" and the "consolatio fratrum" (§ cxxxvi.) This is quite in the spirit of the Protestantism, which forbids brethren to exercise any authority over one another.[5] As to the manner in which this brotherly oversight must be practised in His Church, the Lord Himself has given a very important rule,[6] and the practice of the Apostolic age enables us to see what zeal, and yet what tender wisdom, was shown by the first witnesses and followers of the Lord in this respect.[7] Even excommunication in the Apostolic sense of the word, though not ordained in that form by Jesus Himself, was a revelation of the Holy Ghost, a "severitas ad medicinæ naturam composita" (Calvin), which, as is evident from the result, could only bring about good.

4. If, however, the good has ever been made pernicious, it certainly was in respect to the theory and practice of churchly guidance and discipline. We at any rate cannot possibly find, in the manner in which the doctrine of the so-called "keys of the Kingdom of Heaven" (*Potestas Clavium*) is developed in the Romish Church, and even in the Confessional writings of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, the pure expression of the words and spirit of the Lord. By His great word to Peter,[8] soon repeated in a modified form to all his fellow-disciples,[9] the Lord did not intend two, or even more "keys," as distinct from one another, but only granted

[5] Matt. xxiii. 8; 2 Cor. i. 24.
[6] Matt. xviii. 15—17.
[7] Rom. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. v. 1, *sqq.*; 2 Cor. ii.; 2 Thess. iii. 6.
[8] Matt. xvi. 19.
[9] Matt. xviii. 18; John xx. 23.

in a metaphorical manner to His first disciples the right of ordering and prescribing, of declaring things admissible or inadmissible, in the spiritual domain.[10] In reality we do see them make use of this power, but in a spirit of moderation and wise reserve; so that even Peter, for example, nowhere bestows the forgiveness of sins by virtue of his own Apostolic plenitude of power (in the sense of Matt. ix. 2), but leads the man whom he reproves humbly to implore it.[11] Would that his earnest warning against being lords over the heritage of the Lord had not been so soon forgotten with respect to this oversight and discipline![12] But we have already seen, in § cxxxiii. 2, on what a loose foundation the edifice of the Hierarchy was soon raised; and even where it was a question of preserving right and order, we too speedily see the question of Paul, "Shall I come unto you with a rod?"[13] affirmatively answered by those who called themselves successors of the Apostles. Merely with a word do we mention the Church system of Penance in the first centuries, with its different degrees or stages, of weeping, listening, kneeling, standing; the increasing power of the Confessional; the Interdict, with its terrible consequences; the Crusades for the extirpation of heresy; the entire Churchly Administration of Justice, supported by the secular power as an obedient servant; and the Auto-da-fès, and their horrible cruelties. It was high time for a Reformation, which, even if it did not put an end to, at any rate set bounds to, this great abuse of assumed authority. It is only a pity that the Romish leaven was more easily condemned than entirely put away, even among the Reformers themselves. In the churchly excommunication, as this was understood in Geneva at the time of Calvin, we are as little able to find the true expression of the spirit of Christianity as in the stake of Servetus, which was erected with the assent of the most celebrated persons. But even in the Lutheran Church, power continued to be allowed to the Confessional, which can hardly be justified, even if (without any foundation) we regard the later ministers of the Gospel as on a par with the Apostles of the Lord, and thus possessed of the same authority. In no case, at least on Evangelical principles, can we speak of actual remission of sins by the preacher of the Gospel, as the Lutheran Orthodoxism has attributed to him the right not merely of an "absolutio *declarativa*," but also of an "absolutio *exhibitiva*," (that is, the power of *giving* actual pardon). Cyprian knew better than this, when in his Epistle 75 he wrote, "Non quasi a nobis remissionem peccatorum consequantur (pœnitentes), sed ut per nos ad intelligentiam delictorum suorum convertantur." And again, *De Lapsis*, c. 18, "Nemo se decipiat; solus Dominus misereri potest. Homo Deo non potest esse major, nec remittere aut donare indulgentiâ suâ servus potest, quod in Dominum delicto graviore commissum est, ne adhuc lapso et hoc accedat ad crimen, si nesciat esse prædictum: maledictus est homo qui spem habet in homine." If it be thought necessary for dogmatical or churchly reasons—we, indeed, hardly know why—to continue to speak of "the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven," then must everything belonging to them be brought back to the one key of the preaching of the Gospel; that is, the ethico-

[10] Compare Isa. xxii. 22; Rev. i. 18; iii. 8.
[11] Acts viii. 22.
[12] 1 Pet. v. 3.
[13] 1 Cor. iv. 21.

spiritual power of the Word; while it will not be easy to prove that the Lord would have entrusted any other besides this to the hands of Peter, or of any one else.

5. Yet, even after this protest against everything which savours of priestly dominion and compulsion of conscience, all that has been said respecting the necessity for the oversight of love in the communion of faith remains of undiminished force, and we must most deeply deplore that churchly discipline in the congregation has sunk to such a depth that it has consequently become to the world an object even more of disdain than of opposition and hatred. It is not the province of Christian Dogmatics to probe these wounds more deeply, or to show the mode of healing them. This belongs to another domain; and we gladly observe that churchly guidance and discipline are at least as yet alive in principle, though their application still leaves very much to be desired, for reasons for which the Church is partly responsible, but which can partly not be attributed to its fault. Only, as we leave the sphere of Ecclesiastics, it may not be left unobserved that every exercise of churchly discipline, if it is to be of any significance, and to give promise of the fruit we desire, must proceed from the Church itself, or at any rate be done in its name; that it may not make use of any but moral means, in accordance with the words and spirit of the Lord; that it must seek nothing less than the preservation of the fallen, the glorifying of the Lord, and the removal of legitimate offence; and lastly, in its zealously continued efforts it must in no case forget the limit which has been set to it, as an imperfect, as a militant, as, in one word, an earthly Church in this dispensation. Hence if the ideal continues to be beyond the reach of any human power on earth, that very feeling excites the longing for a less imperfect condition, and thus increases the interest with which the eye is directed from the Church and her means of grace towards that better future, which is now to be spoken of under *Eschatology*.[14]

Compare the important article *Schlüsselgewalt*, by G. E. STEITZ, in Herzog, *R. E.*, xiii., pp. 579—600, and the literature mentioned there; to which must be added, besides that brought forward in § cxxxiii. 3, the essay of STEITZ, *Begriff der Schlüsselgewalt*, in the *Theol. Studien und Kritiken* (1866), iii., p. 435, *sqq.* Upon the formula for cutting off from, and receiving again into the Church, in our Liturgical Writings, compare the essay of J. A. MENSINGA, *l. c.*

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

What position is accorded in the Scriptures of the New Testament to Christian Church-life?—Origin, value, and claim of the Christian observance of Sunday.—Further elucidation of Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 15—18.—Discipline in the age of the Apostles.—The legend of John and the young prodigal.—In what respects has Christian Church discipline in particular departed from the great principles which are attributed to it in the New Testament?—The *Clavis errans* et *non-errans* of the Canonists of the Middle Ages.—How is it that the Reformation still retained in the doctrine of the keys so many sacerdotal elements?—Superiority of the Reformed theory and practice to that of the Lutheran Church.—The later efforts to restore private confession and absolution.—What may we expect, and what must we not look for, from an improved maintenance of churchly discipline?

What is then the result of the whole of Ecclesiology, in conjunction with the doctrine of the Kingdom of God?—Has the Christian Church to complain more of her obstinate enemies, than of her ignorant friends?

[14] Matt. iii. 11.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FUTURE; OR, THE COMPLETION OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

(ESCHATOLOGY.)

SECTION CXLI.—TRANSITION AND SURVEY.

BETWEEN the ideal and the actual condition of the Kingdom of God is an infinite distance, which is never perfectly filled up on this side of the grave. On this account the life of faith and of love is necessarily also a life of hope. This hope rests its expectation on that which the Faithful One reveals in His own Word concerning the things of the future, and concerns as well the Personal condition of every man on the other side of the grave, as the Consummation of all things for the whole Church and the world.

1. We spoke of the means of grace, by which the Holy Spirit calls forth and strengthens the life of faith, and cannot doubt that by a devout use thereof it is possible for each believer, and for the whole Church, to rise to a comparatively high degree of spiritual growth. Yet Scripture and Experience equally proclaim that perfection itself is never attained to on this side of the grave; and the Israel of the New Covenant is on this account, like that of the Old, emphatically a people of the future. Thus then this last chapter also of the doctrine concerning Salvation stands in direct *connection* with that which immediately precedes, yea, with all the preceding parts; and the six chapters, through which we have passed, in their totality point forward to this Seventh as the limit of our investigation. The necessity for understanding something of the things of the future is indeed so universal, that every form of religion, of any degree of development, has its own Eschatological expectations. Our plan by no means admits of our here making a matter of special inquiry of those of earlier or more modern Heathen nations; yea, not even of our so treating those

which were, or still are, to be found among the people of Israel. Here the question is exclusively in what distant prospect that Christian hope rejoices, which is justly classed among the noblest fruits of the Spirit;[1] and even in answering this, we enjoin upon ourselves, for more than one reason, the utmost possible conciseness. We can touch only on the ground-forms and main lines—not on the complete fitting up—of the Christian-eschatological doctrinal structure.

2. The *foundation* for this structure can be no other, than that which a true God has revealed in His infallible Word concerning the things of the future. While the philosophy of religion in general may apply itself to the examination as to what human reason by its own light proclaims concerning immortality and eternal life, Christian Dogmatics avails itself of another torch in this mysterious obscurity. Here it emphatically presupposes the truth of that which has already been earlier treated of, such as the supra-naturalistic Theistic conception of God; the existence of a particular revelation of salvation; the trustworthiness of the words of the Lord and of His first witnesses concerning things unseen and eternal. It consequently has not to return to the question as to the continued existence of the spirit, which was already treated of in connection with Anthropology (§ lxviii.); and just as little to that as to the nature of Death, which was already entered into in connection with Hamartology (§ lxxxi.). Thus, when the well-known distich says, in making a résumé of Eschatology:

> "*Mors* tua, *Judicium* postremum, *Gloria* cœli
> Et *Dolor* inferni sunt meditanda tibi,"

the first and last of these at least need here be spoken of only in so far as both fall within the sphere of the things beyond. Concerning these and other questions "*de Novissimis*," it is self-evident that as well the Empiric as the Speculative Philosophy must preserve silence. The former can here observe nothing, unless with some it clings to the supposition of continued manifestations from the obscure world of spirits; the latter here gropes in uncertainty, even when it proceeds from Christian presuppositions, and will in the opposite case not rest until the whole of Eschatology is relegated into the domain of baseless Imagination. "The world beyond is the one enemy, but in its form of a future foe the last enemy, which speculative Criticism has to combat, and if possible to overthrow."[2] He alone who really *believes* that through the Gospel life and incorruptibility have been brought to light, can with the desired result attempt to *know* the things which in this domain also are freely given and laid up for him of God. Naturally the eye, in connection with this attempt, is in a discriminating manner directed to that which is to be looked for with regard to *some* and with regard to *all*, to the Microcosm and to the Macrocosm; without its being actually necessary, or even possible, in connection with this last, to devote again separate attention to the expectations both for the Church and for the World.

3. The *difficulty* with which, more than any other, the examination of Eschatology has to contend, arises *partly* from the nature of the case, in

[1] Rom. v. 5; Gal. v. 5; 1 Pet, i. 3.

[2] Strauss († 1874).

connection with the sensuous nature of man; *partly* from the incomplete, sporadic, even apparently contradictory character of so many hints relating to the things of the future, which are to be found in the New Testament, and which, moreover, are usually veiled under the garb of poetic-prophetic imagery. If, too, it is comparatively easy to frame a Petrine, Pauline, Johannine Eschatology; it becomes more difficult, where the teaching of all must be combined with that of the Lord into one compact whole, since we are without any fixed standard, by which we can everywhere decide with infallible accuracy what is imagery, what literal prophecy of a glorious reality. We cannot be surprised that here the expectations so greatly differ, even of those who in other respects build upon the same foundation. Questions arise, with regard to which even the best can speak only by way of conjecture, and to this also it is no doubt to be ascribed that—with some few exceptions—the bulk of Dogmatists enter only very cautiously upon this domain, and frequently treat the subject only in an extremely cursory manner.

4. Yet the high *importance* of the Eschatological problems scarcely needs to be formally indicated. The question, "What shall be the end?" slumbers deep in every Christian heart; and it becomes of so much the greater significance, in proportion as for some and for all the end is nearer at hand. As all other articles of Dogmatics presuppose and prepare the way for Eschatology, so does this in turn shed the light of eternity on every cloud which yet rests upon the parts already traversed of the sanctuary of this science. We cannot therefore concede to Schleiermacher, that these "prophetic" articles are of less dogmatic importance than, *e.g.*, the Soteriological ones. The value of both is perfectly equal; yea, while that of all other Loci *remains* unchangeably the same, that of the Eschatological investigation *increases*, in proportion as the catastrophe of the great drama approaches. Just as the whole of Theology resolves itself into Teleology, so does this latter finally resolve itself into Eschatology; and certainly it is not to be regarded as accidental that, as the thinking of the fourth century was especially dominated by the Theological and Christological question, and that of the sixteenth by the Soteriological, so in the nineteenth the importance of the Eschatological—almost overlooked by the Reformers—becomes constantly more universally recognised. "It is not to be denied that our Age enters with an earnestness and intensity, such as no earlier one has done, into the Eschatological examination, and presses forward in the complete development of this doctrine—one sign amongst many, that we are hastening towards the great decision."[3] Thus it *is* already in its beginning, and is ever to be looked for in a higher degree. It cannot but be, that in this process many an ecclesiastical and ascetic abortion should arise, where the investigation is begun and continued not in the light of a Christian-philosophic, genuinely Theological use of the Scriptures, but from the standpoint of a mechanical theory of inspiration, not without the influence of powerful sympathies and antipathies. For science, however, all this becomes only one argument the more to do in its measure what it can, with the avoiding as much as possible of a mechanical Realism on

[3] Kling.

the one hand, and an all-subtilising Idealism on the other. And this is the more necessary, since also to the most pressing questions of the Present the key is ultimately to be sought in the domain of a Future as yet temporarily hidden from us, but of the character of which we are infallibly assured.

Compare the article *Eschatologie*, in Herzog's *R. E.*, iv., p. 154, *sqq.*, and the literature there adduced. To this may be added, as concerns the conceptions beyond those of the New Testament, W. MENZEL, *Die vorchristliche Unsterblichkeitslehre*, 2 parts (1870); H. OEHLER, *V. T. Sententia, de rebus post mortem futuris illustrata* (1846). On Christian Eschatology in its totality, E. ZELLER, *Die Lehre des N. T. vom Zustande nach dem Tode, Tüb. Jahrb.* (1847); J. P. BRIËT, *De Eschatologie, of Leer der toek. dingen volgens het N. T.*, 2 parts (1857, 1858); C. E. LUTHARDT, *Die Lehre von den letzten Dingen* (1861); H. KARSTEN, *Die letzten Dinge* (1861); F. FABRI, *Zeit und Ewigkeit* (1865); H. W. RINCK, *Vom Zustande nach dem Tode* (1866); H. GERLACH, *Die letzten Dinge, unter besond. Berücks. der Eschat. Schleiermacher's* (1869); KEMMLER, *Het Christel. ideaal der toekomst* (from the German, 1870). The writings of E. NAVILLE, *La vie éternelle* (1862), and of D. CHANTEPIE DE LA SAUSSAYE, *De toekomst* (1868), can—however interesting in themselves—only in the broader sense be included in the Eschatological literature, since they in part treat of something different from that which the title implies. In the *Vermischte Schriften*, also, of J. P. LANGE, highly important contributions are to be found. In the domain of devotional reading on this subject, the names of BAXTER, STILLING, LAVATER, MUSLIN, MUSTON, J. C. WIJS, and many others, deserve to be mentioned with honour. For the history of this doctrine in Holland, the work of C. M. VOS, *De Leer der Vier Uitersten*, etc. (1866), is of importance.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Review of the Eschatological expectations of believers in Israel.—Whence is it that in Mosaism the hope of immortality retires altogether into the background?—Did Israel in this respect owe something also to contact with other nations?—Can the Eschatology of the Synoptical and that of the Johannine Christ be perfectly harmonised?—Do the Apostolic utterances on this point form a compact whole?—The history of the Eschatological question in its main features.—Can we, with regard to this domain of our investigation, speak in a rational sense of constant progress?

FIRST DIVISION.

THE PERSONAL CONDITION.

SECTION CXLII.—THE DEPARTED SPIRIT.

ON the death of the body the departing spirit is transported into a condition which, in the light of the Gospel, can just as little be conceived of as one of unconscious sleep, as one of already completed happiness or misery. Rather must it be looked upon as a state of self-consciousness, and of preliminary retribution, but, at the same time, one of gradual transition to a great final decision—a transition experienced in a world of spirits, in whose various circles Salvation and Perdition is determined above all by the inner state of each.

1. That the spirit lives on immortally, even after the death of the body, may be considered as established, not only on theological, but also on philosophical grounds. Now, however, it becomes the question in what condition the departed spirit finds itself immediately after the demolition of the bodily organism in which it was enclosed. If this question is even in itself difficult to answer, it becomes the more so, from the fact that the Scriptures of the New Testament afford so extremely few hints touching the so-called separate state. The prospect of the sacred writers extends far beyond death and the grave, to the impending Advent of the Lord; and this Advent—it can be denied only by an exegesis under the influence of dogmatic prejudice—is looked for by all the Apostles, without exception, as very close at hand (§ cvii. 6). Then the general resurrection, the great judgment, the end, in a word, of the present economy; all this is so immediately on the eve of coming, that the intervening period between death and resurrection wholly recedes into the background in the consciousness, or at least in the contemplation and description, of the witnesses of Christ. Nevertheless, it is evident that their expectation, at least with regard to the time of the Parousia, has not been realised, and with renewed urgency the question again comes into the foreground, how are we to conceive of the condition immediately after death? A perfectly sufficient answer is nowhere given in the Gospel, but yet there are not wanting suggestive and trustworthy hints.

2. At once it is apparent that no reasons whatever exist for supposing the condition immediately after death to be a state of unconsciousness and

soul-sleep. This opinion was formerly maintained by the Thnetopsychitæ, opposed by Origen in the year 248, who believed that the soul fell with the body into the sleep of death, in order to be raised simultaneously with the body at the last day. It was revived by the advocates of the Psychopannuchia in Arabia during the Middle Ages (1240), with whose opinion it is said that of Pope John XXII. was in unison. The Anabaptists also, at the time of the Reformation, entertained the same view, and were energetically combated by Calvin in his *Psychopannychia* (1534). Among its later advocates, in Germany we meet with Reinhard and Delitzsch; in England, W. Coward (1702-1704); in Holland, T. Roorda[1] and others. The Irvingites of the present day also range themselves on the same side; yea, even Luther, as is well known, leaned now and then to this opinion. The idea found its recommendation in the manifest difficulty there is in conceiving of a continuation of self-conscious life without the bodily organism. Yet it is emphatically contradicted by all that we observe of the nature and activity of the spirit even here, in ourselves and others, and not less by Holy Scripture, which partly everywhere presupposes the opposite, partly emphatically expresses it. Even the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, taken alone, must lead any one, for whom the word of Jesus has still any authority, to another supposition. If the dead are sometimes spoken of in the New Testament as sleeping, κοιμηθέντες, it is on account of the outward resemblance which death, to *our* eye, bears to sleep; not to speak of the fact that sleep and unconsciousness are yet by no means the same thing. The taking up again of the thread of consciousness and memory after an interval of ages is still more difficult to conceive of than the continued existence of both; and it seems absolutely impossible to think of all those who have died since the beginning of the world as still sleeping on.

3. Just as little ground, however, does there exist for assuming that man immediately after death is in a state of perfected happiness or misery. The Scripture nowhere teaches this—certainly not in Eccles. xi. 3, which is often adduced in this connection from the mere sound of the words—and the nature of the case rather causes us to expect the contrary. For death is simply birth into another world, in which we must henceforth *live*, *i.e.*, grow and become developed, but in which also the beginning cannot possibly be the same as the continuation and the end. If, in thus speaking, we carry over the notion of time into the domain of the World Beyond, we follow in this the unequivocal guidance of Holy Scripture, which teaches us clearly to distinguish between the condition of the departed *before* the Parousia, and that *after* it. Also, according to the word of Jesus, Matt. xi. 20—24, there remained a day of judgment to be looked for by the then already sentenced cities. For this day also[2] are the spirits of the abyss kept; and in the Apocalypse we hear the departed spirits exhorted with reference thereto to wait yet a little while in hope.[3] For the departed spirit there must thus exist—even where perhaps the standard of time is entirely different from what it is with us—a distinction between the Past, the Present, and the Future. The spirit in its disembodied state looks back upon life, and forward to the Parousia, the goal of expectancy alike for the militant

[1] *Zielkunde*, p. 72. [2] Jude 6. [3] Rev. vi. 9—11.

and the triumphant Church. Its to-day is the simple continuation of the course it followed on earth, downwards or upwards, and in which it now inwardly ripens for the portion which will be manifested at the last day, and of which it already experiences a foretaste of the enjoyment or the terror.

4. After death, the difference in principle, which existed even here below, between the children of light and the children of darkness, is thus ever more developing; and the man finds himself placed in a very real and just state of retribution, although a state of retribution as yet only in its beginning, in relation to God and—to himself. Upon the broad, as well as upon the narrow way, falls the impenetrable curtain of death; but the first step after borders immediately upon the last step before this curtain. Death alters our condition and our surroundings, but in our personality nothing. Individuality, self-consciousness, memory, remain; as, among other evidences, the parable of Luke xvi. 19—31, clearly teaches. Thus necessarily for him who had his highest good in this life, the awakening in eternity must be accompanied with a painful sense of want, and the feeling of anguish proceeding therefrom—the first pang inflicted by the worm which henceforth shall never die. The believer, on the other hand, knowing to whom he belongs, can experience on his entrance into the world of spirits only a first sense of liberation and repose. If we may infer from Luke xvi. 22,[4] that he is conducted thither by Angels, we may also add that he is henceforth introduced into much closer communion with Christ, than he has ever known here.[5] He is thus consoled where others suffer pain,[6] and shares already, in its beginning, in that Sabbath-rest which God has prepared for all His people.[7]

5. We are merely following the indications given by Holy Scripture, when we expect that for those who, from no fault of their own, knew not the Gospel, opportunity will exist even in the separate state for hearing of the way of life. (Compare 1 Pet. iii. 19—21; iv. 6.) As well Acts iv. 12a, as Matt. xxv. 34, *sqq.*, must be true with regard to *all;* since Christ could not possibly occupy the place of Judge of all, unless each soul had been placed personally in presence of the appearing of Christ, and has at least had the opportunity of a decisive choice (§ civ. 5, 6). With regard to those, however, who have here lived and died in conscious and obdurate unbelief, we may conclude absolutely nothing from such hints. He who wilfully despised the Gospel, will even in eternity be able to hear nothing except what he here willed not to understand. A transition from the one to the opposite condition after death is accordingly spoken of as inconceivable, by the mouth of Truth itself;[8] but, on the other hand, it is probable on internal grounds that, as well on the right hand as on the left, advancement and progress is made ever in *the same* path in which the man was already walking even before his death.

6. The question whether we can accept, with the Romish Church, the doctrine of a properly so-called *Purgatory*, an intermediate state between

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[4] Compare Heb. i. 14.
[5] Phil. i. 23; Rom. viii. 38, 39; xiv. 9; 1 Thess. v. 10.
[6] Luke xvi. 25.
[7] Heb. iv. 9—11.
[8] Luke xvi. 26.

heaven and hell, is in what has been before said already in principle answered. The Gospel refers, indeed, to a separate state between death and the coming of the Lord; but nowhere to a condition between happiness and misery, from which, duly purified, one can pass over into everlasting bliss. It is true the idea of a so-called *Purgatorium* is a comparatively old one; already in Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine we find the first traces thereof; and especially by Gregory the Great († 603) was this dogma much developed, and afterwards was ratified and maintained by the Council of Florence (1439), and later by that of Trent. But just as little as the doctrine of the *Limbus Patrum et Infantium*, argued for by the Schoolmen, does it find in Holy Scripture itself a single semblance of proof. Exegetical perplexity must indeed have grown to an excessive height before, clinging to the mere sound of words, it attaches itself to sayings like Mal. iii. 2; Luke xii. 59; 1 Cor. iii. 15. Clear utterances, like Luke xxiii. 43, and Phil. i. 23, rather lead to a distinct denial of that which is so stoutly asserted on this point; and Rev. xiv. 13 at all events teaches that the pious dead, in consequence of the positive certainty of the Lord's blissful coming, may already be esteemed and pronounced blessed. It is unnecessary to speak further of all the abuse to which the Romish saleable Mass for the dead, with all that is connected with it, must necessarily lead. Even where, from our standpoint, we speak of a progressive development in the world beyond the grave—for the redeemed thus one of increasing sanctification—we cannot possibly think of such a material purification as that of which a Dante in his immortal work has given us a beautiful but imaginary description. As frequently, so here also, the original germ of truth has been so overladen with fantastic forgeries as to become absolutely unrecognisable and unserviceable.

7. Only thus much can and must be admitted, that the intermediate state is lived through, in a definite circle either of happy or unhappy ones, in a condition of being in natural harmony with each one's inner life. Even though our plan admitted of it, we should gain but small result for the Christian doctrine of Salvation by a renewed examination of the descriptions given in Holy Writ of Sheôl, Abraham's bosom, Paradise, etc., for the reason that they belong mainly to the domain of popular ideas of revealed truth, not to revelation itself, properly so called. But even though it should be thought necessary wholly to surrender the former, as belonging to a now obsolete view of the world, the thing itself, rightly regarded, does not thereby become essentially altered. The condition of bliss or woe, thus experienced in its first stage, we can only conceive of as experienced *somewhere*; in the Great Father's house there are assuredly countless dwellings,[9] and there is no reason whatever to fear that after all a *place* will be wanting, destined and fitted to be the abode of bliss or misery. *Where* it is to be sought, may in a certain sense remain a matter of indifference; not so, however, the consideration that heaven or hell is for the departed first of all and chiefly an inner condition. For the separate spirit is in a certain respect unclothed, bodiless,[10] and thus probably lives a life of the deepest retirement within itself, to which perhaps the word of Col. iii. 3 is

[9] John xiv. 2.

[10] 2 Cor. v. 3.

applicable; and thus, only at the appearing of the Lord, passes over into that condition which is so suggestively indicated in verse 4. While for the ungodly a state of loneliness, of darkness—of all that, in a word, which caused sacred and profane Antiquity to shudder at the thought of the kingdom of the dead—it is for the Christian, on the other hand, a glorious morning after the night of death, in which the sun of the great day constantly draws nearer; a period—to employ a well-known figure—of the assembling, the preparing, the expectation of the guests, *until* the host himself appears in full splendour, and the royal banquet begins. In Christ he is at once blest, indescribably blest, but still as yet only blest in hope.

Compare GUEDER'S article *Hades*, in Herzog's *R. E.*, v., p. 440, *sqq.* On immortality in general, besides that which we have written, pp. 369—373, also J. I. DOEDES, *Leer van God* (1871), p. 96, *sqq.*, with the literature there adduced. On the World Beyond, J. P. LANGE, *Das Land der Herrlichkeit* (1838), and his paper, *Die Reise nach dem Lande der Wahl, Vermischte Schriften*, ii., p. 258, *sqq.*; as also the treatise of OERTEL, *Hades, exeget. dogm. Abhandl. über dem Zustande der abgeschiedenen Seelen* (1863). On Purgatory, RINCK, *l. l.*, p. 60, *sqq.*, where at the same time many others are mentioned.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

If we must indeed suppose that even the Apostles looked for a speedy return of the Lord, how was this possible? and what follows therefrom with regard to the Gospel conception of the state of the departed?—Is there no difference between the description of this condition in the New Testament and in the Old? and whence this difference?—Is there sufficient reason for counting on the immortality of *all* men?—History and criticism of the doctrine of the soul's sleep.—Can the soul exist and work independently, even without the body?—Is there reason for supposing a continued relation between the world of spirits and that of men?—Is it allowable also to pray for the dead? and what does the Lutheran Church teach on this point?—May we believe that the dead pray for those whom they have left behind?—Rise and development of the doctrine of Purgatory.—Is there absolutely no purifying process necessary after death for believers who are yet very imperfect?—The exact sense of Rev. xiv. 13.—Has the central germ of the Scripture doctrine of heaven and hell been swept away under the influence of the modern view of the world?

SECTION CXLIII.—THE RESTORED BODY.

The departed spirit by no means remains devoid of a bodily organisation, in which it can live and work. The Gospel, on the contrary, teaches us to look for a restoration of the whole man, although in a form of existence entirely different from that which it had here upon earth. The nature and circumstances of such an entire restoration, even as to the body, naturally remains incomprehensible to us on this side of the grave. But its possibility is guaranteed by belief in the omnipotence of the living God; its

certainty for the Christian rests on the inviolability of the relation between the risen Lord and His people; and its moral necessity, in connection with the doctrine of a perfectly righteous retribution, is for thoughtful belief raised above all reasonable doubts.

1. The doctrine of the Resurrection of the dead in the narrower sense of the term is a doctrine which is *par excellence* Christian. Heathen antiquity was unacquainted with it, even in those cases where it had risen to the hope of the immortality of the soul; and considered the bare idea of a restoration of the body too as ridiculous.[1] From the Christian point of view, on the other hand, the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead belongs to the foundation already laid in the first instruction in revealed truth;[2] and it is even regarded as absurd, to attempt to gainsay this expectation.[3] Already in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, especially in those of later origin, are found traces of this heart-cheering prospect. If formerly, death was only a descending into a cheerless region of shades (שְׁאוֹל), later the expectation was cherished, that those who had entered upon the sleep of death would not only awake, but come forth to everlasting weal or woe.[4] Under the image of a bodily resurrection, Isaiah,[5] Ezekiel,[6] and Hosea[7] sketch out the national restoration of the Israelitish people; but manifest, precisely by the choice of this image, that this prospect itself was not for them an unknown or inconceivable one. Specially among the Pharisees of the time of Jesus do we accordingly find the hope of the resurrection cherished under the most sensuous forms; and the Sadducees, who opposed it, did not escape the reproach of unbelief and irreligion. Far, indeed, from the Lord's combating this expectation, He vindicates it against unintelligent opposition,[8] and repeatedly makes mention, not merely of the immortality of the soul,[9] but also of the resurrection of the dead in a yet future age.[10] In the Fourth Gospel, also, He causes us to look forward to this great event, as an all-decisive and simultaneous one, at the end of the ages.[11] Very soon, moreover, we hear His Apostles, notably Paul and John, bear testimony to the same hope. The first emphatically maintains the same against the Corinthian teachers of error, and accounts it a dangerous departure from the truth, to teach that the resurrection has taken place already.[12] With manifest preference he presents this doctrine in the foreground,[13] and brings it into the closest connection with the Christian's consolation and sanctification.[14] John, too, specially in the Apocalypse, makes mention of the resurrection of the dead, as a future event, to be looked for at the coming again of Christ.[15] On the ground of all this, and in harmony therewith, we accordingly see the hope of the resurrection

[1] Acts xvii. 32.
[2] Heb. vi. 2.
[3] 1 Cor. xv. 12.
[4] Dan. xii. 2.
[5] Isa. xxvi. 19.
[6] Ezek. xxxvii. 1—14.
[7] Hos. xiii. 14.
[8] Matt. xxii. 22—33.
[9] Matt. x. 28.
[10] Luke xiv. 14; xx. 35.
[11] John v. 28, 29; vi. 40, 44, 54.
[12] 1 Cor. xv.; 2 Tim. ii. 18, *sqq.*; compare Acts xxvi. 8.
[13] Acts xxiii. 6; xxiv. 15.
[14] 1 Thess. iv. 14; 1 Cor. vi. 14.
[15] Rev. xx.

boldly and unanimously confessed by the Christian Church of all ages. In the Confession of Nicæa the "resurrection of the dead" is spoken of; in the Apostolic *Credo* [primâ manu] "the resurrection of the flesh;" in that of Athanasius (Art. 38) mention is made in this connection expressly of "the bodies."[16] The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead cannot thus be denied, without at the same time, in the name of scientific Criticism, contradicting alike Biblical and Churchly Dogmatics. Perhaps this opposition on many sides would not have been so loud and stubborn, if men had formed a more accurate conception of the thing itself which they were assailing.

2. In order to contemplate the *nature* of the resurrection in its true light, we must begin by limiting within just bounds the Churchly but not Evangelical conception of a resurrection of the *flesh*. That it has led in many cases, in good or bad faith, to an utterly realistic view, and that this found a welcome support in the ill-understood word of Scripture,[17] is a matter of notoriety. But by no means must the Lord or His Apostle be held responsible for that which both equally distinctly deny. According to their unequivocal word, Matt. xxii. 30; 1 Cor. vi. 13; xv. 50, all that belongs exclusively to the senses falls away in the life of the resurrection; and thus must all be at once eliminated from our notion of resurrection, which is opposed to the nature of a spiritual body. The expression, resurrection of *the flesh*, in the literal sense of the word, we regard as not to be defended; and on that account it is better also not to use it, unless it be accompanied with the explanation that a resurrection of the *body* is intended thereby. The identity of the *constituent parts* of the earthly and the heavenly body is no more taught us in the Gospel, than we are compelled to believe that the grain of corn and the full-grown stalk which has sprung from it must still consist of the same matter. The words *body* and *flesh* were not wont in the Churchly usage of the first centuries to be so clearly distinguished, as now, under the influence of a better exegesis, is the case; and, not to speak of many others, Luther himself has somewhere acknowledged, that it is better to speak of the resurrection of the body than of that of the flesh.

With regard to the whole subject, we must be on our guard—in connection with those utterances of the New Testament which speak of a future resurrection of the dead—against thinking exclusively of dead bodies. The saying, "Thy dead shall live," signifies something more than "The corpses shall rise to new life." It is a resurrection, *i.e.*, a restoration to life, for the *whole* man, which is taught us in the Gospel, *including also the body*, which was lost to the dying one, but is now restored to him much more glorious. As Origen already said of it: "*This body indeed, but not such as it was*—σῶμα τοῦτο μέν, ἀλλ' οὐ τοιοῦτο." That which is here promised is just as little the immortality of the spirit alone, deprived of its bodily organisation, as the restoration of this flesh and blood in which the immortal occupant formerly lived and moved. All silly questions therefore, which have arisen

[16] The teaching of the *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 57, and of the *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxxvii., in the main agrees with the above.

[17] *E.g.*, Ezek. xxxvii. 1—14.

out of the presumed identity of this our flesh with the future body, present a difficulty only for those who attribute their own mistaken notions to Jesus and the Apostles, and such questions find their own answer in Matt. xxii. 29. The restored body must in its very essence, in the deepest kernel of its being, be ever the same as this present; it is at the same time furnished with wholly different properties, as Paul expressly teaches in 1 Cor. xv. 42—49; Phil. iii. 21.

3. The *period* of this resurrection is to be looked for, according to the constant teaching of the Lord and His Apostles, not immediately after the death of each, but only with the consummation of the ages and the coming of Christ. The idea of a resurrection immediately after death may perhaps appear more acceptable to many; the Gospel teaches it just as little as that the blessedness is consummated immediately after the departure from this world. Here the dead are represented as Πνεύματα,[18] as souls of those who, now destitute of their earthly clothing, repose yet for a time, and must await the day of Resurrection,[19] which only then approaches when the trumpet of judgment sounds, and the Christ appears upon the clouds.[20] It is, in this domain especially, not the first question what view seems the most rational, but which is the most Scriptural. The utterances which have been thought to lend countenance to the idea of a resurrection immediately after death, are found upon more careful examination not to support this view. In the conversation with the Sadducees the Lord teaches not only that the departed live, but also that they shall be raised in a yet future age.[21] He who has already eternal life here, and thus in dying does not die, shall and must also be raised at the last day.[22] Paul, too, expects the heavenly dwelling-place, when the earthly house of this tabernacle is broken up;[23] and if we are to think of the future body in connection with this his word, yet he does not say that he receives it immediately after his death—this indeed he could not say, without in the Second Epistle contradicting that which he had said in the First—yea, if he even did say this, it would still be a question whether he was here expressing more than a personal expectation with regard to himself, which he cherishes against the event that, as a witness of the truth, he should see prepared for him a violent death. In that case there is here to be found an exception, which does not contradict, but confirms this rule, that those who are fallen asleep shall not be raised *before* the coming of the Lord, but only *at* His coming.[24] So firmly established is this law, that Scripture in the dim distance opens up the prospect of more than one resurrection; first a partial one, and then an absolutely universal one. Of the former, not only does the Apocalypse seem to speak, ch. xx. 4—6, but also the Lord, Luke xiv. 14, and Paul, 1 Thess. iv. 16, as also 1 Cor. xv. 23, as compared with ver. 26; without, however, its connection with, and difference from, the other resurrection being more nearly indicated. Thus much is evident, that the Gospel teaches a resurrection not only of the just, but also

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[18] Heb. xii. 23.
[19] Rev. vi. 9—11; ■ Cor. v. 3.
[20] 1 Thess. iv. 16; 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. ■ Luke xx. 35, 36.
[22] John vi. 40, 54; compare xi. 26.
[23] 2 Cor. v. 1.
[24] 1 Thess. iv. 13—16.

of the unjust.[25] As regards the question, whether we have to conceive of the departed spirit as up to that hour without any bodily organisation; and if not, in what connection the supposed "Interim-body" stands to the resurrection-body properly so called, Holy Scripture does not furnish us with any sufficiently distinct hints. Perhaps we may be allowed to suppose that the departed spirit shapes and forms for itself a body, by virtue of the power of God dwelling in it, fitted for the new form of existence, and of which the resurrection-body—in which the departed shall arise and become visible at the coming of Christ—is as it were the final result, the manifestation and glorification willed and wrought of God. Thus stands the ripened stalk of corn, after long-continued development out of the dead grain, partly under, partly above the soil, to bloom in full splendour before the eye of all, when at length the harvest sun arises. But here the one grain has been sown so much earlier than the other: may we possibly think of a successive attainment of maturity in the World Beyond, and thus also speak of an earlier resurrection of those who are already perfected? The Apostolic word does not actually forbid it,[26] if at least the ordinary conception of a *simultaneous* resurrection of all the dead is regarded—according to the nature of prophetic vision, without differences of time—as the poetic-prophetic *grouping together* of that which shall in reality be seen realised not *side by side*, but *in succession*. Here, however, we deeply feel how difficult it is to carry the idea of time into the domain of eternity, and certainly it is safest not to be wise above that which stands in such manner written, as to be intelligible for all.

4. The *possibility* of such a resurrection of the body is certainly conceivable only from the Christian-theistic standpoint,[27] and starts the same difficulties, but has also the same reasons in its favour, as that of every miracle of creation, or new-creation, in every domain of life. From the materialistic point of view, even from a one-sided spiritualistic point of view, of course no bodily resurrection is conceivable; but on the other side we can here, least of all, be insensible to the force of the well-known words of Oetinger, which speak of "a bodily form" as "the end of all the ways of God." It is not even necessary here to think of a purely mechanical reunion of that which has been separated at death, if with Paul[28] we have found the deeper ground even for the quickening of the body, in the spiritual principle of life in Christ. We may perhaps suppose that an invisible and indestructible germ of the future body dwells already in the present, and that precisely therein is placed the guarantee of the identity of the two, an identity even amidst the greatest possible difference. "The σῶμα πνευματικόν of the Redeemed is in its innermost essence identical with the present body of man; so that the latter is to be regarded as the unexpanded germ of the former, the former as the glorious development of the latter."[29] Think of the immense difference between the body of the new-born child and that of the octogenarian old man; between the covering which encloses the chrysalis and the brilliant wings of the butterfly; between the rough stone, and the

[25] John v. 28, 29; Acts xxiv. 15; compare Dan. xii. 2.
[26] Compare Matt. xxvii. 52, 53.
[27] Rom. iv. 17.
[28] Rom. viii. 10, 11.
[29] Julius Müller.

sparkling princely diamond, which after polishing has proceeded from it. All are wholly different, and yet properly no other than they originally were: thus also shall be the resurrection of the dead. Enough, whatever questions may yet remain unanswered, in connection with the closeness of the relation which unites the redeemed to Christ, the *certainty* also of the perfect restoration and new creation by Him, even as regards the body, admits of no denial.[30] Without this resurrection indeed we can just as little speak of perfect blessedness, as of absolutely righteous retribution, in eternity. This latter calls for the manifestation and equitable rewarding or punishing of that which has been done through the instrumentality of the body;[31] the former appears irreconcilable with the thought that man should after death hover as a wholly bodiless spirit in infinite space. The hope of the resurrection attains even to an inner *necessity* in its connection with belief in the love and the righteousness of God, in the power and faithfulness of the Redeemer, in the dominion and triumph of the Spirit over inanimate matter. And as concerns the *glory* of the resurrection, we can simply conjecture it from afar; but yet we deeply feel that "the redemption of the body"[32]—*i.e.*, not a redemption by which we are *delivered from* the body, but in which the body also *partakes*—must be the source and condition of the highest blessedness. Thus the prospect here opened up to us has the highest significance, alike for the consolation as for the sanctification of the believer; and merits on this account to be ever again maintained against every renewed opposition.[33]

Compare the article *Auferstehung der Todten*, by KLING, in Herzog, *R. E.*, i.; E. H. VAN LEEUWEN, *Specimen exhibens J. C. doctrinam de resurrect. mort.* (1859); a treatise of LANGE, *Verm. Schriften*, ii., on the *Auferstehung des Fleisches*. On the heavenly body, J. HAMBERGER, in the *Jahrb. für deutsche Theol.* vii. 1, viii. 3. On the doctrine of a twofold resurrection, a paper by SCHULTZ, in the same, xii., p. 120.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Whence the absence in the heathen world of a properly so-called hope of a resurrection, which includes the restoration of the body also?—Is any positive prospect of the resurrection of the body to be found already in the Old Testament?—Explanation of the Lord's conversation with the Sadducees.—Connection of His bodily resuscitation with His people's hope of resurrection.—Occasion, tenour, and abiding value of the Apostolic argument of 1 Cor. xv.—The more realistic and the spiritualistic view of the ancient Church in its varying course of development.—The different hypotheses of the more modern Theologians and Theosophs.—Must we conceive of the departed spirit as wholly bodiless?—What light is here shed by the analogy of the realm of nature?—Should we not be deprived of something very essential in the perishing of the Christian hope of the redemption of the body?—Christian art in this domain, in the light of believing science.—Sense, beauty, and force of 1 Cor. xv. 54—58.

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[30] Phil. iii. 20, 21.
[31] 1 Cor. vi. 13, 14; 2 Cor. v. 10.
[32] Rom. viii. 23.
[33] 1 Thess. iv. 18; v. 23.

SECTION CXLIV.—THE FINAL DECISION.

The final decision of the portion of the whole man consists in a condition of personal blessedness on the one hand, or of misery on the other, which is indicated in Holy Scripture under manifold figures, is inflexibly righteous, and on that account equally marked by various degrees, as from its nature absolutely irreversible. According to the constant teaching of the Lord and His Apostles, however, the thus completed decision of man's portion is to be expected only on the last day, when the glorious coming of Christ for ever puts an end to the present economy of the world.

1. By degrees we penetrate more deeply into a domain in relation to which Dogmatics, instead of propositions, might perhaps better place a series of queries. Yet faith may rejoice that to some at least of these questions a satisfactory and trustworthy answer can be given. This is also the case with regard to the final decision as to the future of each individual in the mysterious World Beyond. Whatever now is to be finally looked for, as well at the right hand as at the left hand of the yawning gulf, when the departed spirit is re-united with the restored body, cannot remain doubtful, for him who combines as well as possible into a compact whole the scattered intimations of the Word of revelation.

2. In general terms, the future state must be regarded as a state of endless *retribution*. We have already had opportunity in an earlier place (§ cxix. 4) to speak of the Christian doctrine of reward, in relation to that of God's free grace. It may here without further argument be taken for granted that in connection with the certainty of the reward, absolutely nothing is detracted from the riches of God's free grace. The punishment of sin is fully merited (§ lxxviii.), and the crown of life is conferred only by free *gift*. But He who confers it, is at the same time the righteous Judge, who will by no means overlook the toil and the conflict of persevering faith.[1] Every idea of merit or of caprice disappears with the consideration that God crowns His own work in the just one now made perfect, and that the retribution of eternity is after all the natural *harvest* of that which was here sown in time.[2] Already on earth has retribution occupied a large place in the life alike of the children of light and of the children of darkness. Yet this retribution was still only something provisional, partial, often apparently utterly inequitable, and in most cases hidden from the bulk of mankind. The utterance of the highest righteousness is here usually as it were whispered in the ear of him to whom it refers; there it is proclaimed as from the house-tops.[3]

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[1] 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8; Heb. vi. 10. [2] Gal. vi. 7, 8; Rom. ii. 6—10. [3] Matt. x. 27.

3. From this it naturally follows that the judgment on the impenitent sinner can be nothing else than terrible (§ lxxix.). The Lord Himself speaks [4] of an everlasting fire, which was once prepared for the devil and his angels. "Prepared," consequently not originally existing, but formed by God in the heat of His holy wrath, when the fall of the Angels thinned the heavenly ranks, and now also appointed as the abiding place of the children of the father of lies. There is no doubt that Holy Scripture requires us to believe in a properly so-called *place* of punishment, in whatever part of God's boundless creation it is to be sought. That the different images under which it is represented, cannot possibly be taken literally, will certainly need no demonstration; but it is perhaps not unnecessary to warn against the opinion that we have here to do with *mere* imagery. Who shall say that the reality will not infinitely surpass in awfulness the boldest pictures of it? We should at least be afraid of arbitrarily taking away from the seriousness of the Biblical representation, if we should assert that the retribution rendered hereafter on account of sin will be exclusively an inward one; since undoubtedly the place of abode, the condition, surroundings, etc., will combine to bring home to the condemned a sense of how fearful a thing it is "to fall into the hands of the living God." And even turning away with a shudder from this thought, it is easy to imagine how much anguish is in this condition connected with the fact of a retribution, of which the bare imagination here on earth inspires such terror. It cannot but be that death and the awakening which follows it should be for the impenitent sinner a fearful revelation of his true condition, with regard to which the deception of outward appearance is now no longer possible. To see oneself as one is, must in itself be sad enough, even though one did not also see the Eternal Judge above and beyond oneself. The want of all in which the heart has here sought its heaven, must in itself constitute a hell of anguish, even though it were not accompanied by the dread sense of God's holy wrath against sin. Separation from God is the second death of the sinner, precisely because he continues man, who apart from God cannot possibly be happy. And this death is no unconsciousness, but is accompanied with a self-consciousness and self-reproach, which must the more painfully sting, when it is accompanied with the reproach or mockery of others, seduced or seducers, and at the same time with the heart-rending sense that the opportunity for recovery from the consequences of past misdeeds is gone for ever. Such a remorse can only lead to powerless rage, such rage only to equally powerless despair. Unquestionably the Scripture gives us reason for believing that even in this gloomy domain there are different degrees of future punishment;[5] but all that we know or conjecture with regard thereto impels us only the more with deep emotion to glory with the Apostle in Him "who delivered us from the wrath."[6]

4. Delivered from the wrath—even though we had nothing more to say of the future blessedness of the saved than this one thing, this *negative* conception of it alone must be sufficient to fill the heart with holy joy. Even here, those who believe no longer live under the wrath, not even under the

[4] Matt. xxv. 41. [5] Luke xii. 47. [6] 1 Thess. i. 10.

long-suffering, but in the daily experience of the loving-kindness of God, which is better than life.[7] Yet this life is burdened and embittered by the after-pains of sin, the griefs of earth, the terrors of death. Now, however, of all this it is said, "the former things are passed away;" [8] and with the most perfect deliverance is henceforth come the *positive* side of this salvation, the experience of the highest blessedness. The more difficult it is to speak thereof in a manner worthy of it, because the abundance of the Gospel imagery overwhelms us by the beauty of its colours. What a Paradise has that is charming, a Father's house that is lovely, a City of God that is attractive, a Repast that is refreshing, a Temple that is sacred and blessed—we may think of all these combined, where we wish to form a conception, to any extent vivid, of the *place* of perfect rest and joy. We have no heart to follow Eschatological Realism in its wanderings, where it speaks of a properly so-called city above the air and clouds, of which it measures as exactly as possible the walls and gates, and in which the blessed, with immortal mouth, not only praise, but also eat and drink.[9] We fear lest, by desiring to define too much, one should call forth the mockery of unbelief, without being able to give a satisfactory answer to the questions of faith. On the other hand, however, it must never be forgotten that the Gospel here communicates not simply subjective expectations, but objective revelations, and that the sacred imagery is given not merely for the veiling, but also for the unveiling of the truth. We shall certainly be the less liable to error in proportion as we form to ourselves a more spiritual conception of the proper *nature* of the future blessedness; yet at the same time think of a state of salvation which is enjoyed to the full by the *whole* man. Beyond question heaven offers to the mind the clearest light, to the heart the most blessed joy, to the life the most glorious task. The light of the knowledge of God's Nature, Ways, and Works must there be in every respect the opposite of the dim twilight of this earth. "Heaven is the land of vision, where the Divine Nature is revealed under the most transparent images, the eternal Word in its most perfect, clearest expressions; where the Lord no longer speaks to His people in parables and figures, but where He gives them great total-apprehensions of truth, in addition to which also the heavenly power of perception on the part of man is to be regarded as a new and perfected one, as a highest clairvoyance."[10] The joy of at last being able for ever and perfectly to love the Infinite One, must, if possible, even surpass the highest enjoyment of the "fulness of joy" which is in His presence. What it is really to see Him, after whom the heart could so often go out in holy longing; [11] what, in consequence of this seeing, to be like Him in purity and love;[12] what, to be served by Him, whom *here* in so much weakness we have served; [13] what, to come into the possession of *that* real, well-guarded, heavenly inheritance, which is prepared for those who are joint-heirs with Christ; [14] what, to say nothing more, to reign with the glorified Christ [15]—these are

[7] Ps. lxiii. 3.
[8] Rev. xxi. 4.
[9] Oetinger, Stier, Hahn, Rinck, and many others.
[10] Lange.
[11] 1 Pet. i. 8.
[12] 1 John iii. 2.
[13] Luke xii. 37.
[14] 1 Pet. i. 4; Rom. viii. 17.
[15] 2 Tim. ii. 12.

things which in no earthly language can be duly spoken of. It cannot by any means be doubted that this joy will be augmented by an occupation proportionate to the natural bent, capacity, and heavenly destination, for which the earthly activity, not in point of form, but in point of principle, spirit, and tendency, was the silent preparation. This task is fulfilled in a *sphere* which cannot but still further augment the indescribable happiness. If even here the spiritual converse with some chosen ones of our race could afford a pleasure so pure, the dwelling with Angels and saved ones of every tribe and age must be something yet infinitely more glorious. This blessedness also, and all that belongs to it, we cannot otherwise conceive of than in different *degrees* and stages.[16] There is ground for distinguishing between the *blessedness* (σωτηρία) enjoyed by all who are saved from everlasting judgment, and the *glory* (δόξα) prepared for the faithful combatant after the completed time of trial. But this difference includes in itself a constant increase; and there is perhaps a deep significance in the fact—the remark is Bengel's—that the Seer on Patmos beholds first the white robe,[17] then the palm,[18] and lastly also the harp,[19] given to the redeemed above. Yet who does not shrink from further laying the hand on the transparent veil? Enough, that the *duration* of this enjoyment is endless; and the fear of weariness is possible only in connection with a very mistaken notion of eternity, as though this latter were nothing else than time ever afresh prolonged. "*Nein, Zeit wie Ewigkeit vergeht, wenn man vor Deinem Antliss steht.*"[20]

5. But the *question* arises in connection with the terrible opposition of these two extreme poles, whether so much blessedness cannot be embittered by the misery of loved relations here below; and whether in general at the resurrection also a recognition in eternity is to be looked for? As concerns this last, Revealed Truth has nothing in common with the fancies of a sickly sentimentalism, which is ever doting about scenes of heavenly recognition, not one of which would perhaps, in the deepest depths of the soul, be hailed as the highest ideal of endless happiness. "To depart and to be with Christ," that, and if need be, nothing more, is for the Christian "far better." But yet it cannot but be, that in this glorious Head the members also should recognise each other, even though we may not be able in the least to define the manner in which this takes place. For him who can reason from analogy, and be satisfied with hints, such Scripture places as Matt. xvii. 3; Luke xvi. 9, 23; John xvi. 22; 1 Thess. ii. 19, 20; iv. 17, 18, and some others, give not a little to hope in this respect. Unlimited faith prefers to leave this also, and so many other things, unreservedly to the disposal of Him, who in heaven has assuredly surprises and compensations such as cannot here on earth be described.—This applies especially to that other delicate question, to which we can by no means with some return the inhuman answer, that the sight of the sufferings of hell will heighten the joy of heaven. The morality of such a joy apart, it is even a question whether

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[16] 1 Cor. xv. 41, 42; 2 Cor. ix. 6; compare Luke xix. 15—19.
[17] Rev. vi. 11.
[18] Rev. vii. 9.
[19] Rev. xv. 2.
[20] "No: time and eternity are both lost sight of, when one stands in Thy presence."—THOLUCK.

this suffering will be witnessed by those in the "many mansions," and whether they will there know about any one who is shut out. At all events, the feeling of relationship can no longer continue in the case where all spiritual bonds of union are wanting, because henceforth the voice of flesh and blood is heard no more. Perfect holiness and conformity to the will of God must be the source of a blessedness so imperturbable, that in connection with this must vanish every earthly reminiscence which could cast a shade over the surface of the sun. After every, if need be, unanswered question, there remains the certain hope of faith: "there we shall see God without end, shall love Him without satiety, shall praise Him without weariness." [21]

6. It is unnecessary, except in passing, to point out the high value of a prospect, such as the Gospel alone unfolds to us. What, in comparison with this, is the most æsthetic colouring of the hope of annihilation,[22] with which a Buddhism here and there arising among us flatters itself and others? The *Nirwana* will in the long run just as little prevail against Heaven, as Death can have the last word to say against Life. But it must here be recalled to mind, that the final decision here spoken of, according to the constant teaching of the Holy Scriptures, entirely coincides with the *consummation of all things*, for the great Totality of World and Church, upon which we must now in the following division, in closing, fix our attention.

Compare, besides that which has been already mentioned, the articles *Himmel* and *Höllenstrafe*, in Herzog, *R. E.*, vi.; J. L. HEIBERG, *Eene Ziel na den dood* (1865); SCHUBERT'S account of Peter Forschegrund, rendered into verse by THOLUCK, *Stunden der Andacht* [Hours of Devotion, Bonar's Eng. trans.], Meditation lxvi.; and further, the literature cited by RINCK, *l. l.*

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

What is the sense of Matt. xiii. 39b—43?—What are we to understand by hell-fire and the outer darkness?—Who, according to the Scriptures, have to dread these future punishments?—How are we to think of the blessed contemplation of God in the life to come?—What value has earthly knowledge in connection with that of the world to come?—What are we to understand by "the inheritance of the saints in light"? (Col. i. 12.)—Further elucidation of 2 Cor. iv. 17; 1 Thess. iv. 13—18; Rev. xxii. 1—5; and other Eschatological places.

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[21] *Ibi Deum sine fine videbimus, sine fastidio amabimus, sine defatigatione laudabimus.*—AUGUSTINE.

[22] *E.g.*, in Rueckert's well-known poem, *Die sterbende Blume.*

SECOND DIVISION.

THE CONSUMMATION OF ALL THINGS.

SECTION CXLV.—THE LAST TIMES.

As the record of the Divine Revelation of Salvation directs us to a point of beginning for all created things, so does it lead us to expect, in relation to this our earthly economy, a consummation of all things. This decisive hour, although unknown and not to be calculated, is preceded by the period denominated the Last Times; in which as well the good as the evil—now already present—is developed to its predetermined height; and unmistakable preludes, partly of an alarming, partly of a gladdening nature, announce and actually prepare the way for the Great Day of the Coming again of Christ.

1. The doctrine of the Consummation of all things is, from the nature of the case, equally beset with obscurity, and yet equally indispensable for the Christian thinking, as that of the Beginning by the act of an almighty Creation. He who denies the latter, cannot but accordingly reject the former; and it is perfectly intelligible that unbelieving Science should ever take up again the old refrain: "all things continue as they were."[1] The Christian belief in revelation expresses the very reverse of this; and, wonderfully enough, the incomprehensible becomes here in the long run the only rational view, and that which at first seemed so reasonable—the everlasting duration of the contingent—is seen at last to be admissible only by the Materialist and the Pantheist. If Humanity has in reality a goal to which it is tending, distinct from that of Zoology, into which some tend to resolve Anthropology, and if that goal is the Kingdom of God; then there is no longer any question whether the Kingdom of Nature, and that of Grace, must finally—in whatever way—give place to that of Glory. Thus we are naturally carried forward to the doctrine of the Consummation—*συντελεία τοῦ αἰῶνος*—a question with regard to which we must either be altogether silent, or allow ourselves to be guided by the word of prophecy alone. We stand in relation to that word, where it points us forward to a second coming of Christ, just as, before the fulness of the time, believers in Israel stood to the proclamation of His first appearing. Before the fulfilment we cannot accurately distinguish between form

[1] 2 Pet. iii. 4.

and contents, between garb and essence of the promise; but yet the stammering language of faith is preferable to the powerless silence of unbelief. "The idea of the completion of the Kingdom of God is unmistakably a spiritual mountain-land; a spiritual ascending is here consequently required of us."[2]

2. The certainty *that* an end will really come, based entirely upon the nature of finite things, is also in Holy Scripture most emphatically expressed.[3] Both the nature of the case and the word of revelation lead us to expect an increasing development in the domain of the Kingdom of God; to which an end is made, not in the way of a silent, gradual development, but by means of a great all-decisive catastrophe (§ cvii. 5). This catastrophe comes, according to Jesus' own prediction, unexpectedly, as the thief in the night. It is remarkable how this very figure of the Master's[4] appears in the word and writings of His various witnesses;[5] but it is also not difficult at once to perceive the deep wisdom of this application of it. The Lord has for ever rendered impossible to His people the calculation of the precise period of His return, in order that they might learn ever to await His coming; and the history of the Church in the Tenth Century teaches us to what social confusion and disorder it would lead, if that period could with any degree of probability be determined beforehand. It is on this account entirely as was to be expected, that Apocalyptic-arithmetical calculations, like those of a Bengel, Fleming, Cumming, and others, should ever be falsified by the event. It was said to us, no less than eighteen centuries ago, "In what hour ye think *not*, the Son of Man will come."[6]

3. While this coming takes place unexpectedly, it does not by any means take place without preparation being made for it; and an observing of the signs of the times is enjoined by the highest Wisdom itself upon its disciples.[7] In harmony with, and consequently in essential confirmation of, the view of His contemporaries, who looked for the birth-pangs—ὠδῖνες—of the Messianic age, the Lord points to the *preludes* of His coming;[8] and the Apostolic Writers speak at large of that which in the last days must precede the Supreme Day.[9] The prospect here opened up is well adapted to put to shame every optimistic-humanistic dream, as though in this best of worlds things would ever grow better, the nearer the stream of time rolls to the ocean of eternity. On the contrary, if we think of the day of the Parousia as the Harvest, not only the wheat, but also the tares, must grow and ripen to this day; and thus also constantly more fully display their true nature. One gladdening prelude is certainly the general proclamation of the Gospel of the Kingdom to all nations;[10] but this takes place "for a witness unto them," by

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[2] Lange.
[3] 1 Cor. vii. 31; 1 Pet. iv. 7.
[4] Matt. xxiv. 43, 44.
[5] 1 Thess. v. 2; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Rev. iii. 3; xvi. 15.
[6] Luke xii. 40.
[7] Luke xii. 54—56; Matt. xvi. 3.
[8] Matt. xxiv. 4—14.
[9] 2 Thess. ii.; 2 Tim. iii.; 2 Pet. ii.
[10] Matt. xxiv. 14.

no means with the result that all are saved. On the contrary, the hostility to the truth will never rise higher than just when it is on the brink of being for ever vanquished.[11] An advancing tide of seduction and increasing apostasy is to be looked for, which shall manifest itself in pseudo-Prophetism and systematic Anti-Christianity. It will become more and more apparent, that the world in the depth of its heart *wills* not the Deliverer provided for it by God, and who meantime is on the way to come again as its Judge. Hence increasing indifference, the nearer the time of decision arrives; and obdurate impenitence, even in the midst of the most terrible judgments.[12] So great a sin must indeed be punished with new sin, and yet greater misery. Thus an ever gloomier period approaches for the world, the Church, the personal and domestic life, in which the faithful to the Lord, amidst ever severer conflict, must hope for less and less repose. The history of the world will not close, before it shall have become apparent to the Church of God in the most awful manner what is to be expected of the boasted toleration of a God-hating world-power towards those who refuse to bow before its gods.[13] Since order and morality has its root in Christianity alone, apostasy from, and insurrection against, the latter cannot but lead to the undermining of all the supports of political and social life. Hence in increasing measure the rising of the now already so well-known sense of "*malaise*," to anxiety, perplexity, desperation, strikingly depicted by the Lord in Luke xxi. 25, 26. By degrees men will begin to be surprised at absolutely nothing, and at the same time to be afraid of everything. Considering the inseparable connection between the natural and moral world, which is made manifest in so many a word and fact of Saving Revelation, it cannot sound incredible to us that inanimate nature also shall feel the thrill of the shocks, which cause the heart of the animate to quail;[14] although we hold ourselves totally incompetent to determine what, in this part of the Eschatological proclamation, is to be taken literally, and what is not.

4. The climax of the misery of the last days is attained in the appearing of the *Antichrist*, whom the prophetic word leads us to expect. The reference to the rise and development of this expectation must be left by Christian Dogmatics to the Biblical Theology of the Old and the New Testament. Here it can only be said, that for him who interprets the Scriptures without preconceived views, and allows his thoughts to be brought into captivity to the obedience of the Word, there can be no doubt that a *personal Antichrist* will yet arise before the close of the world's history. The idea that by the name of the Antichrist is denoted simply an ideal personality[15]—something after the same manner in which the English character is wont to be represented, concentrated in the name of John Bull, or the German in that of Michel—appears to us to be in diametrical opposition to the concrete and individual nature of the Apostolic description. If we see already in the history of the world colossal figures arise in the service of the powers of darkness; and if already in connection with many a name there was heard from sundry lips the question whether *this* was not

[11] Rev. xii. 12.
[12] Luke xvii. 26, 27; Rev. xvi. 9, 11.
[13] Rev. xiii. 11—17.
[14] Mark xiii. 24, 25.
[15] Hengstenberg.

the Antichrist; nothing prevents our seeing in *their* appearance the preparation for a future Central-personality, in whom the spirit of evil will as it were embody itself, and display its full power. With the word Impossible people are already learning, at least in our day, to be a little more chary. We expect the impersonation of the God-opposing principle, preceded by the appearing of atheistic geniuses, who, titanic and satanic, emancipate themselves ever more and more from all moral principle. In this Antichrist the mother-sin, pride, attains its climax, by a boundless self-exaltation in relation to every earthly and heavenly power. It is supported by a deception which works false signs;[16] and truly it is entirely natural, but at the same time the terrible irony of a higher Nemesis, that disbelief in the true Miracle should yet once more be punished with a superstitious belief in false signs. To what extent the manifestations of the spirit-world, in which already so many a one is seeking certainty, are to be traced back to this sphere, can here be only asked. Enough, the full manifestation of this Antichristian power is yet only arrested for a time;[17] but it was already in Paul's days on the point of appearing, and notably by every Antichristian movement it is partly heralded, partly prepared for. This is accordingly the deep sense of the Biblical mode of representation, that it *is* already really in principle the last hour, which is only delayed through the long-suffering of God.[18] Actually all the factors are already present, which must co-operate to produce that final result; there is nothing more that is new to come, there needs only a dam to be removed, and the stream rushes over the plain. The Church inwardly knows these things, although it understands and considers them far too little, and can, on this account, only in the Lord's strength preserve that which yet remains to be preserved, and henceforth become weaned from every sanguine hope, as though at last it should, during this dispensation, see its rights acknowledged by its implacable foe. The parable of the widow in the presence of the unjust judge,[19] on the contrary, presents to us the image of its condition immediately before the end. But just when distress and perplexity have risen to their highest point, deliverance dawns in the form of—the sign of the Son of Man.[20]

Compare the literature in connection with § cvii., to which is to be added the article *Antichrist*, in Herzog, *R. E.*, i. On the Antichrist, compare an article by D. Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Bijbelstudiën* (1860), i., p. 65, *sqq.*; H. W. Rinck, *Die Lehre der H. Schrift vom Antichrist, u. s. w.* (1867); W. Boehmer, *Zur Lehre vom Antichrist, Jahrb. für deutsche Theol.* (1859), iii.; Riggenbach and Auberlen, in their Commentary (Lange's series) on 2 Thess. ii.; the monograph of the latter on the prophet Daniel (1857), and his treatise, *Die Rede Jesu über seine Zukunft*, in his *Beiträge zu Christl, Erkenntniss* (1865), p. 214, *sqq.* Further, in this as in the following sections, Lange's Commentary on the Apocalypse, in the *Bible Work*; and his contribution, *Die Idee der Vollendung des Reiches Gottes, u. s. w.*, in the "Nine Apologetic Lectures" (1869), p. 289, *sqq.*

Points for Inquiry.

What is, in the usage of the New Testament, the connection and difference between

[16] Matt. xxiv. 24; 2 Thess. ii. 9.
[17] 2 Thess. ii. 6, 7.
[18] 2 Pet. iii. 9.
[19] Luke xviii. 1—8.
[20] Matt. xxiv. 30.

"the last days" and "the last hour"?[21]—Further elucidation of Matt. xxiv. 4—14.—History and criticism of the expectation of the Antichrist.—What are we to understand by the τὸ κατέχον of 2 Thess. ii. 6, 7?

SECTION CXLVI.—THE TRIUMPHANT KINGDOM OF GOD.

On the Lord's return an earthly glorification is also to be expected by His faithful Church, a glorification which is the worthy manifestation of its inner development. Without yet being wholly overcome, the Antichristian power is bound for a certain time; until a last struggle leads to its complete overthrow, and therewith to the utter annihilation of every hostile power, finally also of the last enemy.

1. It is the constant teaching of the Gospel, that the continued coming of the Lord in the course of history, is simply the preparation for a last glorious, visible *return* (§ cvii.). He comes, not simply for the eye of faith, but also for that of heaven and earth—to the terror of His foes and the consolation of His friends—bodily upon the clouds of heaven. The character of this second appearing, in contradistinction from the first, is accurately expressed in the old Symbol: "From whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead [κρῖναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς]. The whole Dispensation, which now begins, is a dispensation of Judgment; and if this dispensation is spoken of as a *day*, it is self-evident that here a *prophetic* day[1] is to be thought of, a day of undefined duration. In principle with this simple remark all idle questions and calculations as to the theatre, the possibility, the duration, etc., of the summoning of so many milliards within four and twenty hours, are at once put an end to. In the Gospel-Apostolic description of *one* day of judgment there is collectively and plastically comprehended that which—according to the Apocalypse, especially—extends through different periods and phases. So far as it is given us in the dazzling light of the future to distinguish objects, we must point them out, ever mindful of the lesson of Deut. xxix. 29.

2. That the return of the Lord will not be simply a momentarily becoming visible from heaven, but a return *to earth*, is according to the Scriptures beyond doubt. Those dwellers on the earth, who, according to 1 Thess. iv. 17, are "caught up to meet Him in the air," must certainly be conceived of as then returning with the heavenly host again to the earth. They form an escort to the King, who personally comes to this part of His

[21] 1 John ii. 18.

[1] Ps. xc. 4; 2 Pet. iii. 8.

royal domain. Simultaneously with the coming of Christ takes place *the first resurrection.*[2] The believers, who live to witness this appearing of Christ upon earth, are without dying, by an instantaneous change, made meet for the new condition;[3] and the departed who are ripe for the life of resurrection, live and reign with Christ on earth.[4] It appears to be the meaning of the Spirit, that these chosen ones themselves, in whatever form, take part in the prolonged judgment, accomplished by the glorified King of the Kingdom of God at and by means of His appearing. Paul also[5] teaches us to look for a successive condemnation and destruction of the most powerful enemies of the Kingdom of God. Thus is the power of darkness chained,[6] in expectation that it shall yet hereafter be wholly destroyed. Before this an intervening period must first be passed through, to the consideration of which our attention is now to be devoted.

3. The term *millennial kingdom* has in many an ear so unpleasant a sound that, even from the believing standpoint, some courage is required to range oneself among the defenders of Chiliasm. If we do so nevertheless, in obedience to faith in the Word, without which we know *nothing* of the future, we must begin with repudiating the Jewish form, in which this prospect is represented by some, in a manner which furnished a ready occasion to the Reformers to speak of "*Judaica somnia.*" For us also is the hope here treated of "a real pearl of Christian truth and knowledge;"[7] but it is so only after we have separated the pearl from the variegated shell, in which it is so often proferred to us. Notably the number *thousand* is no arithmetical, but a symbolic number, and nothing may be promised or expected for that period, which is in irreconcilable contradiction with the principle laid down by Jesus Himself in John iv. 21. The predictions of the Prophets also, as to the national restoration of Israel, must not be regarded alone, but be understood according to the rule of Melancthon: "*Euangelium est interpretatio prophetarum.*" But not less true is it, however, that the fulfilment of the prophetic word cannot lead to its entire annulling; and when we inquire as to the indestructible reality which underlies alike the prospect of Prophet and Apostle, we believe that this prospect authorises us to hope for nothing less than *a glorious manifestation of the triumphant Kingdom of God upon earth, even before the entire running out of the course of the world's history.*

4. Such a manifestation we may not expect *before* the return of the Lord, but *after* this return we regard it—even apart from the letter of Scripture—as on internal grounds probable, and moreover as in the highest degree worthy of God. The uniquely beautiful, the eternally true, the highest good, *must* be fittingly made manifest upon an earth whereon they have been so long ignored; and as that earth has so long crowned with thorns its lawful King, it must contemplate Him yet once again, in His full beauty. It is this blissful period to which prophecies like Isaiah xi. 6—9, xxxv., lx., lxv., and others appear to us to point. It will be the time in which the Kingdom of God rules upon earth, naturally in a spiritual-

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[2] Rev. xx. 4, 5.
[3] 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.
[4] Matt. xix. 28; 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3; Rev. xx. 4.
[5] 1 Cor. xv. 23—26.
[6] Rev. xx. 1.
[7] Lange.

dynamic manner, but even on that account with a power and glory which it knows not *now*, and for which it must first be prepared by conflict and oppression; the time in which the "*via crucis*" changes its direction, and rises to the "*via lucis*."[8] Within this period, not earlier, takes place, in our opinion, the national conversion of Israel, expected also by Paul.[9] Israel sees then its King, with deep sorrow on account of its rejection of Messiah;[10] and learns for what a glorious end it has been through so many successive ages, as by a miracle, preserved and kept distinct from all nations. This will perhaps also be the time of the conversion of the heathen in masses; not some individuals only, but whole nations, will begin to inquire after light and life in God.[11] Purified by suffering and conflict, the Church of God now shares in the triumph of its Head; the Bride finds her rest, after her long wanderings in the desert, on the bosom of the Bridegroom. It now becomes apparent that the Kingdom of God is in reality a *power* in every domain with which it comes in contact; and that the highest manifestation of the truth calls forth a life, such as without this is nowhere found on earth. In a word, it is the time of the Christocracy ever more triumphantly unfolding itself; the realisation of the Ideal, of which the old Theocracy in Israel was only the shadow; a realisation, however, which in nothing detracts from the universalistic character of the Saving Revelation now brought to completion. It is certainly not from accident that the Scriptures of the New Testament nowhere mention the name of a particular city, which serves as the central point of this spiritual glory.

5. Altogether there lies over this part of the expectation of the future a transparent cloud, which makes it impossible here to define more particularly; the Millennium is a *period of transition*. The longest night is over, but still the *full* day has not yet come. Instinctively we think of the forty days between the Resurrection and the Ascension of Christ; His Church also has now its Calvary behind it, and its Olivet immediately before it, without having yet ascended this latter. Its enemies are driven back, but not yet destroyed. It is evident that the kingdom of darkness *cannot* rest until it has made trial of a gigantic concentration of its remaining forces: to this the prophetic word points;[12] but the unintelligent mode of interpretation which would read, as it were "between the lines," the names of the nations here intended, is not and cannot be ours. For us is, not the later, but the Apostolic-prophetic Chiliasm a symbolic Hieroglyph, which, from the nature of the case, yet waits in vain for its Champollion; but will least of all find its interpreter in the way of an arithmetical Cabbalistic Science. Enough, against the "Holy City," which you would look for in vain upon the map of the world, assemble the last vassals of the kingdom of darkness; but now no more to be combated, but to be for ever sentenced by the decisive final judgment.[13]

Compare the article *Chiliasmus*, by SEMISCH, in Herzog, *R. E.*, ii.; H. W. RINCK, *Die Schriftmässigkeit der Lehre vom tausendjährigen Reich* (1866); W. VOLCK, *Der*

[8] 2 Tim. ii. 12; Rev. iii. 21.
[9] Rom. xi. 25, 26.
[10] Zech. xii. 10.
[11] Micah iv. 1—4.
[12] Rev. xx. 7—10; Ezek. xxxviii. 39.
[13] Rev. xx. 10.

Chiliasmus (1869); HORATIUS BONAR, *The Coming and Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ* (1849); A. KOCH, *Das tausendjährige Reich* (1872); further, what we wrote, *Christologie*, ii., pp. 434—445; iii., pp. 465—471. To the history, as yet but very imperfectly compiled, a very interesting contribution has been rendered by W. S. C. DEYLL, *Het Chiliasme, ten tijde der Herv.* (1872).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Survey of the history of Chiliasm.—Its exegetical basis.—Whence the manifold prejudice against this part of Eschatology?—What have we to expect with regard to Israel as a nation?—Is there reason to think that the millennial kingdom is already past?[14] —Greater value of the ethical above the mechanical principle of interpretation.

SECTION CXLVII.—THE FINAL JUDGMENT.

The full triumph of the Kingdom of God is at the same time the completion of the decisive Judgment of the world. It is carried out in the presence of heaven and earth by the glorified Christ, who summons all nations before His judgment-seat, and for ever determines the portion of each one, according to the relation of each to Him and to His people.

1. That the history of the world is a continued *judgment* of the world, is acknowledged by all who attentively and believingly observe it. But it is equally manifest, that it can by no means yet be termed the *final* judgment, although it is unceasingly preparing the way for this last. Nothing less than such a final judgment is the postulate of a living faith in the holiness and righteousness of God; and it is easily to be comprehended that the expectation thereof occupies a prominent place in the most diverse systems of religion. Even the first prophecy known to us[1] points forward to a future judgment; in almost all prophetic writings of Israel the Day of the Lord is the final point in their contemplation, and in the background of every Apostolic proclamation the same conception is to be met with.[2] The Lord Himself closed His prophetic activity with a description of the last judgment,[3] which for sublimity and power finds no parallel; and the Seer of Patmos also does not depict the full glory of the heavenly Jerusalem, until he has made mention of the final decision of destiny for all who are living or have ever lived.[4]

2. It is self-evident that the imagery in which the last judgment is presented in Holy Scripture admits of no literal explanation, and that, on that account, all opposition to the reality of the fact, by reason of the plastic

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[14] Hengstenberg.
[1] Jude 14, 15.
[2] Acts x. 42; xvii. 31; xxiv. 25.
[3] Matt. xxv. 31—46.
[4] Rev. xx. 11—15.

form of its description, arises, if not from malevolence, at least from misconception. Even in the Middle Ages it was readily granted: "*totum illud judicium, et quoad discussionem et quoad sententiam, non vocaliter sed mentaliter perficietur.*"[5] But this does not at all prevent the main features of the Scripture conception being the expression of a reality which is above all power of description, but also above all power of invention; and this also is sufficiently apparent, that the last judgment must be regarded not as an isolated act, but as the, in the highest sense natural, result of all that precedes the crown of the whole of that judicial activity of the King of the Kingdom of God, which extends throughout all history. The last judgment is immediately *called forth* by the last Satanic concentration of force (§ cxlvi. 5), from which it becomes manifest that the tares are now at length ripe for the fire.

3. The final judgment is, according to Scripture, preceded by the second, absolutely universal, resurrection of good and evil (§ cxliii. 4). From all points of the immense graveyard of the old earth suddenly appears life out of the dust of the graves. "It shall be one day—a unique day—which shall be known to the Lord."[6] The vast grave of waters also gives forth its dead, and death itself is henceforth irrevocably consigned to death. Now there are on earth no mortals more, but immortals, before whom stands an everlasting weal, or an endless woe. Their destiny is decided by Christ, the Divinely appointed Judge of quick and dead.[7] Who is better qualified and more competent than He, who has received *all* power, who was Himself man, and thus, as no other can do, stands to humanity in the most direct personal relationship? The judgment which He passes is absolutely universal: there is no creature which is able to escape it, and for all the standard is the same. According to the whole tenour of the Gospel, there shall be rendered to every one according to his works;[8] not because these are in themselves meritorious, but because they are the natural expression of the hidden principle of life. Now that the Gospel of the Kingdom, with its great commandment of love, has been proclaimed to all, it is no more than natural that the different relation of love or the absence of love, which each takes towards the disciples of Jesus, should become the rule for determining each one's future lot. Where there was really faith, saving faith, in the heart, how could it manifest itself otherwise than in fruits and works of love? and conversely—how could one, without anything of this love within the heart, be truly fitted for the life of bliss? Nor need we feel surprise that, according to the constant representation of the New Testament, even the chosen and believing ones shall appear before the judgment seat of Christ,[9] although the Lord has said in another place[10] that His people are already in substance judged here on earth. They come not into the judgment of condemnation, but yet appear in the presence of the Judge, before whom they have boldness, and by whom they are now made manifest, in order to receive before the eyes of all the gracious reward of tried fidelity. Precisely this is the essence, and at the same time the

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[5] Thomas Aquinias.
[6] Zech. xiv. 7.
[7] John v. 27; Acts xvii. 31.
[8] Rom. ii. 6.
[9] Matt. xxv. 34; 2 Cor. iv. 14; v. 10; Rev. xxii. 11.
[10] John v. 24.

terrible significance, of the last absolutely universal judgment, that it is the *manifestation* of that which has been for ages concealed, and yet could not fail ultimately to become manifest ;[11] the *separation* of that which was here for wise reasons combined for a time, but which was never inwardly united, and therefore also *cannot* remain together ; the *retribution*, finally, both of the greatest and the least thing which was done or left undone here on earth, with an impartial justice which in itself leaves no room for the thought of an appeal to a higher tribunal. Hence, on the confines of time and eternity, the pronouncing and execution of that judgment cannot be separated so much as in thought.

4. But the question remains, in what *connection* this final judgment stands with the personal decision of man's destiny, which, as we before saw (§ cxlii.), is in principle already to be expected at death. We may confidently suppose that no one at the last day will hear from the mouth of the Judge, that which he does not already secretly know with inward certainty. To himself unquestionably each one is manifest, if not already *before* death, at least immediately *after* it, and silently ripens for the lot of the wheat or the tares. But perfect righteousness demands also a manifestation before others, finally, of all before all ; of all, in a word, not only before the eye of the eternal Judge, but also before that of heaven and earth. After the ethical significance, this gives the cosmical significance of the universal judgment ; this the ground at the same time of the crushing and overpowering nature of this conception, which found its—in our opinion inimitable—expression in the heart-stirring "*Dies iræ, dies illa*," of the Middle Ages. Notwithstanding all which here remains unfathomable, every one who thinks at all deeply must agree that every *dénouement* of the great drama remains in the long run unsatisfactory, which issues in anything less than—an absolutely universal, glorious, and irrevocable Judgment of the World. No wonder that the denial of this hope is accompanied only too often by a thoughtless forgetfulness of God,[12] while on the other hand the cherishing thereof stands in the closest connection with the sanctification and consolation of the Church, especially in a time of conflict and oppression. The days are to be looked for when that which now seems to one and another a dogmatic superfluity will be found the last sheet anchor of otherwise despairing souls. (Comp. *Heid. Cat.*, Ans. 52 ; *Neth. Conf.*, Art. xxxvii.)

Compare our paper on *Eschatology*, in the *Jaarb. v. Wet. Theol.*, ix. (1851), p. 675 ; M. A. JENTINK, *Maran Atha, de Christel. Leer der laatste dingen* (1852) ; A. TREIBE, *Von unseres Herrn Christi Wiederkunft* (1868).

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Comparison of the Biblical with the Extra-Biblical conceptions of the last judgment.—What does the Lord teach in the Fourth Gospel concerning the Messianic judgment ?—Defence of our explanation of Matt. xxv. 31—46, as against other modes of interpretation.—What is especially to be considered in connection with the practical and popular treatment of this subject ?

[11] Matt. x. 27. [12] 2 Pet. iii. 3.

SECTION CXLVIII.—THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH.

At the end of the world's history, the form also of the present world itself is changed. In place thereof is brought in a new heaven and a new earth, destined and fitted to be to all eternity the seat of a perfect and blissful Kingdom of God, in which the Christ never ceases to be the centre of union for His people, even where He gives up to God His Father the now completed Kingdom.[1]

1. While the path of Eschatology is traced over the highest mountain heights, we cannot be surprised that the loftiest peaks are bordered by the deepest chasms. This is notably the case with regard to those questions which yet remain. We saw, after the long working week of the history of our race, with the appearing of the Millennial Kingdom, the dawn of a Sabbath of rest, and after that Sabbath a last conflict, succeeded by perfect victory. Time now disappears from our eye, and that which further awakens our devout attention belongs wholly to the realm of Eternity. Yet the question cannot be put aside: what will now become of the world itself, for whose inhabitants the eternal destiny has been for ever decided? If the Christian consciousness can give no single decision on this point,[2] yet it is something more than a question of mere curiosity; and we rejoice to say that the word of prophecy is not wanting even here in hints, although these in turn call forth a multitude of new questions, to which the only answer that can be given is: "*ignorantian fateri, optima scientia est.*"

2. As well in the Scriptures of the Old Testament as in those of the New, we hear the expectation most positively confessed, that with the present dispensation the earth also, which we inhabit, shall one day have grown old, and be succeeded by a new creation. From the Old Testament there come under this head such places as Ps. cii. 27; Isa. xxxiv. 4; li. 6; lxv. 17, 18. In the New, the plastic representation of 2 Pet. iii. 10—15 especially attracts our attention. If, considering the disputed authenticity of this Epistle, the latter text gives rise to much more doubt than assent, it cannot pass unobserved that the Lord also[3] makes mention of a "passing away of heaven and earth" as certainly impending, while also according to John[4] the world passes away, and according to Paul the whole creation, now sharing with us in the consequences of sin,[5] sighs for an hour of deliverance and glorification (§ lxxix. 9). In the Jewish Theology also of that period, yea, in Heathen poets and philosophers,

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 27.
[2] Schleiermacher.
[3] Matt. xxiv. 35.
[4] 1 John ii. 17.
[5] Rom. viii. 19—23.

we meet with unequivocal traces of the same conception.[6] And indeed, however much that is terrible may be associated with this expectation, it has nothing about it that is absurd, and it is more reasonable than the opposite one. Whatever has once been created and subjected to continual change, bears also in itself the germs of new shocks and of eventual dissolution. We have simply to read again the history of the Flood, or to open a few chapters of the historic book of Geology, in order to feel that what once has happened may be repeated in another manner. There is no single reason for expecting a new and perfect world from the unceasing advancement of chemistry and of industry. On the contrary, material development is made to minister infinitely more to the refinement of sensuous enjoyment than to the cause of truth and righteousness; and it becomes ever more apparent that man, in proportion as he subjects the earth to himself, also the more defiles the earth. What it *could* become for the Kingdom of God, it will one day have become; but the destination of that kingdom lies higher than this visible creation, and wherefore should not the Master, when the instrument has served its purpose, replace it by another? That there are natural forces enough, present in the bowels of the earth, to be able, at a sign of Omnipotence, to accomplish the most terrible overthrow, can be doubted by none. The belief that God in His time will set free these forces, and employ them for the purifying of that which has been defiled by sin, has its solid ground in the word of Prophet and Apostle; and finds its support in all that which, in accordance with that word, we expect of the life of the future. An inquiry as to the nature and effect of the fire of which the Apostle speaks,[7] lies beyond the limit we have marked out for ourselves. We need not even speak of the "boundless universe" which shall "fall in ruins;" Scripture does not direct our glance further than our earth, with its surrounding atmosphere. On this it points to a change, in connection with which it is, for *us* at least, impossible to think only of the destruction of Jerusalem, or of similar events. But at the same time it leads us to expect a new heaven and a new earth, which shall be not merely the opposite, but—so to speak—the consequence, the result, of the great process of purifying and dissolution; the noblest gold, brought forth from the most terrible furnace-heat.

3. It is especially to this reverse side of the picture that the eye of faith directs itself with unspeakable longing. God destroys only to create something more beautiful; and upon the ruins of the sentenced and purified world His hand raises up another, which—not only for the cleansed vision of its new inhabitants, but in a reality as yet to us unknown—shall bloom in unfading splendour. If we mistake not, the last page of the Apocalypse, especially, opens up to us the prospect of a new order of things, in which the old boundary line between heaven and earth is effaced, and this latter, now inhabited by perfectly redeemed ones, itself has become part of heaven. It is certainly a proof how even the science of faith does not always teach its student modesty, when we consider how many pages have

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[6] See, *e.g.*, Cicero, *De Nat. Deor.*, ii. 46; and Seneca, *Quæstt. Nat.*, ii. 23—30.

[7] 2 Pet. iii. 10—12.

been devoted by some in earlier times to all kinds of questions, *e.g.*, as to the animal and vegetable kingdom, the light and food, etc., of the new world, with regard to which even no Prophet or Apostle has ventured to give us any indication. But if this folly is blameworthy, not less so is that of a modern self-styled science, which cannot advance beyond the old doubt as to the reality of things unseen and yet future. Deeper reflection must render the opposite in the highest degree probable, namely, that as nature has shared in the fall of man, so shall it share in his future glorifying, and teaches us to feel not only the beauty, but also the truth, of the saying of Luther: "The earth as yet wears its working garb, then the earth also will put on its Paschal and Pentecostal raiment." In this new Creation we at the same time behold the theatre of the perfect blessedness, of which we have earlier spoken (§ cxliv.), and of which we in vain endeavour to shadow forth the dazzling splendour. To the question, however, what place the glorified King of the Kingdom of God will occupy in this boundless circle, the answer cannot be difficult. His kingly dominion comes to an end in the sense in which we have already spoken (§ cxiii. 9); but everlastingly does He remain the Firstborn among many brethren, their Guide to the living fountains of waters;[8] their Lamp,[9] that is, the mediate cause through whom all continue to receive out of the eternal source their light and life, their holiness and happiness; the golden heart of the mighty Paradise-rose of the blessed, to use Dante's glorious image. Where thus the God-man is seen, and in Him the Father, by all who are *one* in the Holy Ghost, there we need not ask whether this new heaven and earth may truly be termed the crown of the whole work of restoration.

Compare OSIANDER, *De Consummatione Sæculi, Dissertt. Pentas* (1746). Much that is interesting, but also much that is singular, is to be found connected with the questions here under examination, in the full treatment of the "*Res novissimæ*," in the *Loci Theoll.* of GERHARD, the great dogmatist of the Lutheran Church in the seventeenth century; suggestive hints, which give much material for thought, in LANGE, *l. l.*, and in his Commentary on the last chapters of the Apocalypse. On Rom. viii. 19—23, see the literature mentioned in the *Bibl. Theol. of the N. T.*, at the end of § xxxvi.; to which is to be added LANGE, *in loco*, and the *Commentatio* of J. R. WERNINK (1830). Finally, a good paper by Deacon SCHENKEL, *Die Lehre der H. S. von dem Weltende und der Welterneuerung, etc.*, in the *Beweis des Glaubens* (1871), pp. 266—282.

POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

Is the problem here touched upon really one of theological and practical importance?—What views with regard thereto are to be met with outside of the Christian domain?—What influence have the dogmatic peculiarities of the Reformed and Lutheran theology had on the conception formed by each of them of the nature of the future world?

SECTION CXLIX.—RESTORATION OF ALL THINGS?

To the question, which alone remains unanswered, whether the final triumph of the Kingdom of God will lead to the salvation of

[8] Rev. vii. 17. [9] Rev. xxi. 23b.

absolutely all, the decisive answer is to be sought nowhere else than in the Gospel of the Scriptures, and the indication therein given must be received with obedient subjection, even where this perhaps comes into collision with personal opinions and wishes, which are at best but fallible and changeable. (Even side by side with the expectation of an absolutely endless retribution for sin, faith can, may, and must retain the assurance of such a perfect victory of the Kingdom of God, that God, in the fullest sense of the Apostolic word, shall eventually be All in all.[1])

1. In the far remote distance we contemplate the new Jerusalem, peopled with redeemed citizens, and hear the word of Him that sits upon the throne: "Behold, I make all things new."[2] But may we therefore look for a restoration of all things, in the sense that even the kingdom of darkness is resolved into the blissful Kingdom of God? Little as this concluding question can be put aside, it can equally little surprise us that it has, in almost every age, been answered by one or another in the affirmative sense. From Origen to not a few distinguished Christians of our age, we see the doctrine of the Apokatastasis confessed with inner conviction and warmth, and within his own heart many a one hears a voice which pleads in favour of the expectation of the eventual general blessedness of all. The idea of an absolutely endless perdition has about it for our natural feeling something indescribably harsh, and appears, indeed, absolutely irreconcilable with all which we believe of God's redeeming love. If we believe, on the one hand, that God really wills the salvation of *all*, and on the other that His grace is perfectly able to triumph over the resistance of sin, it becomes almost inconceivable to us that a cheerless Dualism should be the end of the world's history. In the domain also of the Theology of the Kingdom the thoughtful mind strives after unity, which appears to be attainable only when eventually God's wide-extending creation contains no other than blissful creatures. It cannot, moreover, be denied that the Scriptures of the New Tesament, definitely those of Paul and John,[3] contain at least some solitary hints by which a silent expectation on this point is awakened and cherished. One may even ask whether it is not the only termination in connection with which the Divine plan of the World and of Salvation is wholly realised; and, on all these grounds, one would almost feel justified in expunging, from above the door of the place of woe, the terrible inscription, "All hope abandon, ye who enter here;" and substituting for it the jubilant chorus of sensuous joy, "Allen Sündern soll vergeben, und die Hölle nicht mehr sein." That the latter view of the world is at least the most attractive and æsthetic, can scarcely admit of contradiction. Whether, however, it may be considered the most moral, and therefore must be the last word of Christian Theology, is another question.

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[1] 1 Cor. xv. 28.
[2] Rev. xxi. 5.
[3] Rom. v. 18; xi. 32; 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22, 28; Phil. ii. 10, 11; Rev. v. 13, 14.

2. It is in itself, when we turn to the other side, a fact in our estimation of no small significance, that the Christian Church of all ages has decidedly rejected the doctrine of the Apokatastasis, even when it was presented to her in the most charming colours. It was as though the Church instinctively felt that thereby too little is, in principle, made of the holy and inflexible righteousness of God, of the deepest solemnity of the Gospel proclamation, yea, of the whole Scriptural mode of regarding the connection between the present and the future life; and in reality there is—its dangerous character not even being taken into the account—something in the apparent easiness of this solution of the world-problem which awakens an involuntary suspicion. It is by no means open to us here to attach the highest authority either to our reason or to our feeling. Upon the point of becoming arbiters in our own cause as regards this matter, we run the risk of becoming just as little impartial as, without the Word of God, we are sufficiently enlightened in our judgment. As against the single indications in that Word which appear to be in favour of the Apokatastasis, there stand, as has been already earlier observed (§ lxxix. 12), others, and those more numerous, which lead to an opposite conclusion; while even the first-named, on a nearer examination, and viewed in their connection with the whole of saving doctrine, lose, at least in part, the force which has been ascribed to them. So long as Scripture has a right to a voice in the decision, utterances like Matt. xxv. 10, 41, 46; Mark ix. 44—48; Luke xvi. 26; Rev. xiv. 11, and others, cast a heavy weight into the scale; while the principles of Hermeneutics teach that obscure and ambiguous places must be explained by the light of such clear and unambiguous places, and not the converse. Even though we had only the words of Jesus concerning the sin against the Holy Ghost,[4] the eternity of punishment would be thereby already, in principle, decided; unless it be, without reason, asserted that this sin never was committed, and also never will be committed. But even regarded as to the nature of the case, it is scarcely possible to think of conversion—and without this it is evident that no salvation is conceivable—in connection with an opponent such as is depicted in 2 Thess. ii. or Rev. xiii.; and thus also for him an exception must be made to the desired rule, unless one should choose to suppose an *annihilation*, in the proper sense of the term, of this hostile power. Such an annihilation of the incurably Evil would, we readily confess, appear most acceptable to *us*, if we should give to our own thoughts the highest authority in this province. For it is very difficult to conceive of an endless existence in connection with one who is entirely separated from God, the source of life, on which account accordingly Scripture has described this condition as "the second death."[5] On the other hand, however, we feel that such an annihilation would be no slight alleviation of sufferings, from which precisely this prospect is most positively cut off.[6] Thus we here come to a point at which the question of principle is determined, which must give the last deciding weight to the scale of our considerations; and then we can and must—even though the issue should be against our own

[4] Matt. xii. 32, and parallel places. [Compare what is said of Judas, Matt. xxvi. 24.—Tr.]
[5] Rev. xx. 14.
[6] Rev. vi. 16; xiv. 11.

selves—only bow before the written word of Him who cannot lie, and give Him the full honour of the obedience of faith. From this standpoint, in our estimation the only trustworthy one, we may not, with regard to this matter, after having mentioned all that is for and against—following in the footsteps of an able predecessor[7]—close the subject of Dogmatics with a query, since the for and the against are, at least according to the Word of Scripture, *not* equal. We even regard it as dangerous to wish to be wiser, more just, or more merciful than the Infinite Himself, who has an eternity before Him for His justification. The conception of an everlasting gulf is difficult; but that of an absolutely universal salvation, which causes the history of the Kingdom of God to end in a sort of natural process, is in itself not less dangerous, at least for him who really believes in the mystery of freedom conferred by the Creator upon the creature. This freedom involves in itself the terrible possibility of an endless resistance, which equally endlessly punishes itself; and he who is in truth *entirely* penetrated with a sense of the all-surpassing glory of the Revelation of Salvation in Christ, and of the absolute culpability of its obdurate rejection, will at least consider the matter again and again before speaking of the idea of an endless retribution as being absolutely irreconcilable with that of an eternally holy Love. "The thought of an everlasting perdition is to such an extent a necessary one, since there can be in eternity no enforced sanctification of the personal being, and in eternity no blessed unholiness."[8] If it still remains for us a problem how God could bring into existence a creature which would be for ever miserable, this is only another form of the question already treated of (§ lxii.), how under the government of an Almighty and Holy God sin and death, with all the inevitable consequences thereof, could come into the world and reign. The one question just as little as the other admits of perfect solution; but our science is only a science of faith, fully conscious, not only of the basis on which it rests, but also of the limits which are imposed upon it. Even though it could not repress the *inmost* desire, the latent hope that one day at last, on the land of everlasting retribution, a star of hope might arise; yet it would not be able to confer upon any one the right, in opposition to Scripture, to proclaim such hope as certain, yea, to make of it the starting-point and foundation of a whole theological system, which may be destined in the event to be blown over by the breath of a terrible reality. We distrust every mode of regarding the doctrine of Salvation, which in its foundation and tendency fails to do justice to the seriousness of the conception of an everlasting *Too Late*, and of the holiness of a grace which cannot indeed be exhausted, but can just as little be mocked. Christian Dogmatics has to do with no other thoughts of God than those revealed by Himself; and, with regard to every obscurity which yet remains, to console itself with the hope of the Seer, "There shall be no night there."[9]

Compare ERBKAM, *Ueber die Lehre der ewigen Verdamniss*, in the *Stud. und Krit.* (1838), ii., pp. 384—467; P. STEEN, *Diss. Theol., De loco τῆς ἀποκαταστ. πάντ.* (1856); MARTENSEN, *l. l.*, § cclxxxvi.; C. SCHMID, *Die Frage von der Wiederbringung aller Dingen*, in the *Zeitschrift für deutsche Theol.* of 1870, i., p. 103, *sqq.*

[7] Martensen. [8] Nitzsch. [9] Rev. xxii. 5.

Points for Inquiry.

Historical examination as to the doctrine of the restoration of all things.—Is it not an inevitable deduction from the principles of the Reformed system?—What are we, according to Scripture, to understand by the second death?—Is there good reason for distinguishing, with some, between absolute and relative eternity of punishment?—Critical-exegetical review of the position with regard to the *loca probantia* on both sides.—Does Scripture afford absolutely no reason for expecting an eventual annihilation of the ungodly?—What is the significance of 1 Cor. xv. 22, 28?

SECTION CL.—CONCLUSION.

The glorious completion of the Kingdom of God, in the consummation of the ages, is the full accomplishment of the Divine plan with regard to the World and to Salvation;[1] this accomplishment becomes at the same time its perfect justification;[2] and this accomplishment and justification both form the inexhaustible theme of a song, which blends in the everlasting Soli Deo Gloria.

> "Glory be to the Father, to the Son,
> And Holy Ghost!" All Paradise began,
> So that the melody inebriate made me.
> What I beheld seemed unto me a smile
> Of the Universe; for my inebriation
> Found entrance through the hearing and the sight.
>
> Dante, *Paradise*, xxxvii. 1—6.
> (Longfellow's translation).

Βλέπομεν γὰρ ἄρτι δι' ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι, τότε δὲ πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον· ἄρτι γινώσκω ἐκ μέρους, τότε δὲ ἐπιγνώσομαι, καθὼς καὶ ἐπεγνώσθην.—Paul.

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[1] Sections lxv. and lxxxii.

[2] Section lxiii.

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